ACROSS / A15

Hero's burial set for Fil-Am soldier

WORLD / A20

Annan describes Iraq violence as worse than civil war

NEWS / A2

Judicial and Bar Council removes Miriam from list

SPORTS / A22

Payla, Marcial win anew, near bronze in Doha

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, December 5, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 360 P18 website: www.inq7.net

RP-US forces try soft tack vs Abu terrorists

BIGYAN SILA NG BASIC NEEDS

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE map in the US briefing room looks like standard-issue military, but the color-coded markings are not shorthand for fighting units, defensive positions, or future lines of attack.

RP-US/ A6

Opposition stalls Cha-cha express

By Michael Lim Ubac

OPPOSITION LAWMAKERS YESTERDAY MANaged to stall a plan by President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives to convene a Senate-less constituent assembly (Con-ass) to amend the Constitution and adopt the parliamentary system.

Debates centered on a majority move to

OPPOSITION/ A6

40 years in jail for Smith

"NICOLE" raises her fist in jubilation as the court sentences her rapist to imprisonment of up to 40 years. AFP

3 other GIs acquitted in rape of 'Nicole'

By Volt Contreras

A FILIPINO JUDGE YESterday made legal history—and turned a dramatic page in Philippine-American relations—by sending a US Marine to prison for up to 40 years for "bestial acts" against an intoxicated Filipino woman.

In a verdict that drew wild cheers and joyful tears in and outside a jampacked Makati courtroom, Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon found Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith "guilty beyond reasonable doubt" of raping the woman the nation had come to know as "Nicole."

Pozon sentenced the 21-year-old Smith to *reclusion perpetua*—a jail term ranging from 20 to 40 years at the maximum.

But the judge acquitted three other US Marines accused of conspiracy in the crime.

Nicole burst into tears after the decision was read out. Smith looked dazed.

The judge immediately ordered Smith taken to the Makati City Jail and denied what was apparently a last-minute attempt by one of the defense lawyers to keep the American in the US Embassy's custody.

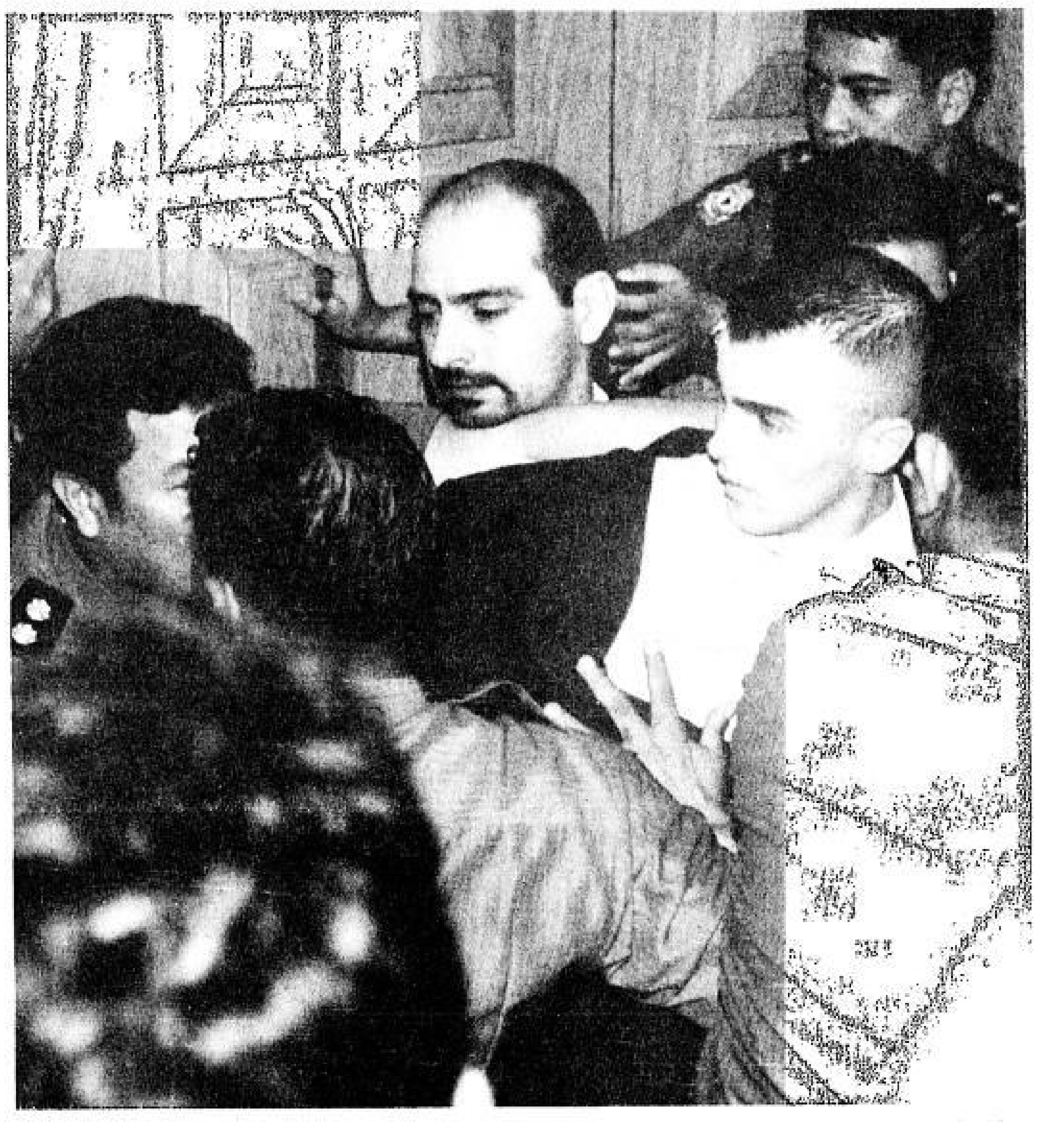
With the bang of his gavel, Pozon silenced the pleading made by defense lawyer Ricardo Diaz, who invoked the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement to prevent his client's detention in a Philippine jail.

It was a sweet victory for Nicole, the 23-year-old management accounting graduate who had accused the four Marines of conspiring to rape her just before midnight of Nov. 1, 2005, at the Subic Bay Freeport.

Diaz said he would appeal the ruling.

The case was the first known instance of a US soldier being convicted by a Philippine court of a major crime, at least since the shutdown of the US military bases in the country 14 years ago.

40 YEARS/ A4



POLICEMEN grab and pull Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith from a coaccused, Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier, inside the Makati courtroom after the reading of the verdict on the Subic rape case. EDWIN BACASMAS

Historic court trial ends in high drama

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Jocelyn R. Uy

THE YOUNG AMERICAN MARINE stood erect before the judge, his face devoid of any trace of emotion. Then the single word that would change his life echoed through the courtroom.

At the sound of the word "Guilty," the blood seemed to rush to the face of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith and his usually pale cheeks took on a reddish hue.

Behind him, "Nicole" wailed in the arms of her stepsister.

Screams and applause filled the packed courtroom as Nicole's legal team and supporters rejoiced at their legal victory.

The historic trial ended in high drama.

"We feel happy, we feel victori-

HISTORIC/ A4

Where to jail convict stirs anew controversy over VFA provision

By Armand N. Nocum and Leila B. Salaverria

HOURS AFTER HE WAS CONvicted, US Marine Daniel Smith joined 634 other inmates at the Makati City Jail (MCJ)—a place that houses suspected killers, robbers, swindlers and rapists.

Where Smith will eventually be jailed, however, will be the next round of a legal and diplomatic battle between the Philippines and the United States.

Judge Benjamin Pozon ordered the temporary incarceration of Smith at the MCJ in accordance with judicial procedure.

Jail warden Supt. Delvic Oreiro told reporters that Smith would most likely be confined at cell number 11.

Oreiro said on television later that the American would be alone in the cell as "a matter of security."

Guarded by Makati policemen, Smith arrived at the jailhouse accompanied by some US Embassy officials. At about 8:30 p.m., consul Christopher Rowan came to join Smith at the jail's records office.

From the MCJ, Smith is supposed to be transferred to the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City, the usual destination of convicted felons.

But Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said Smith should be

WHERE/ A6

Phivolcs says complacency caused deaths

By Blanche S. Rivera and Leila B. Salaverria

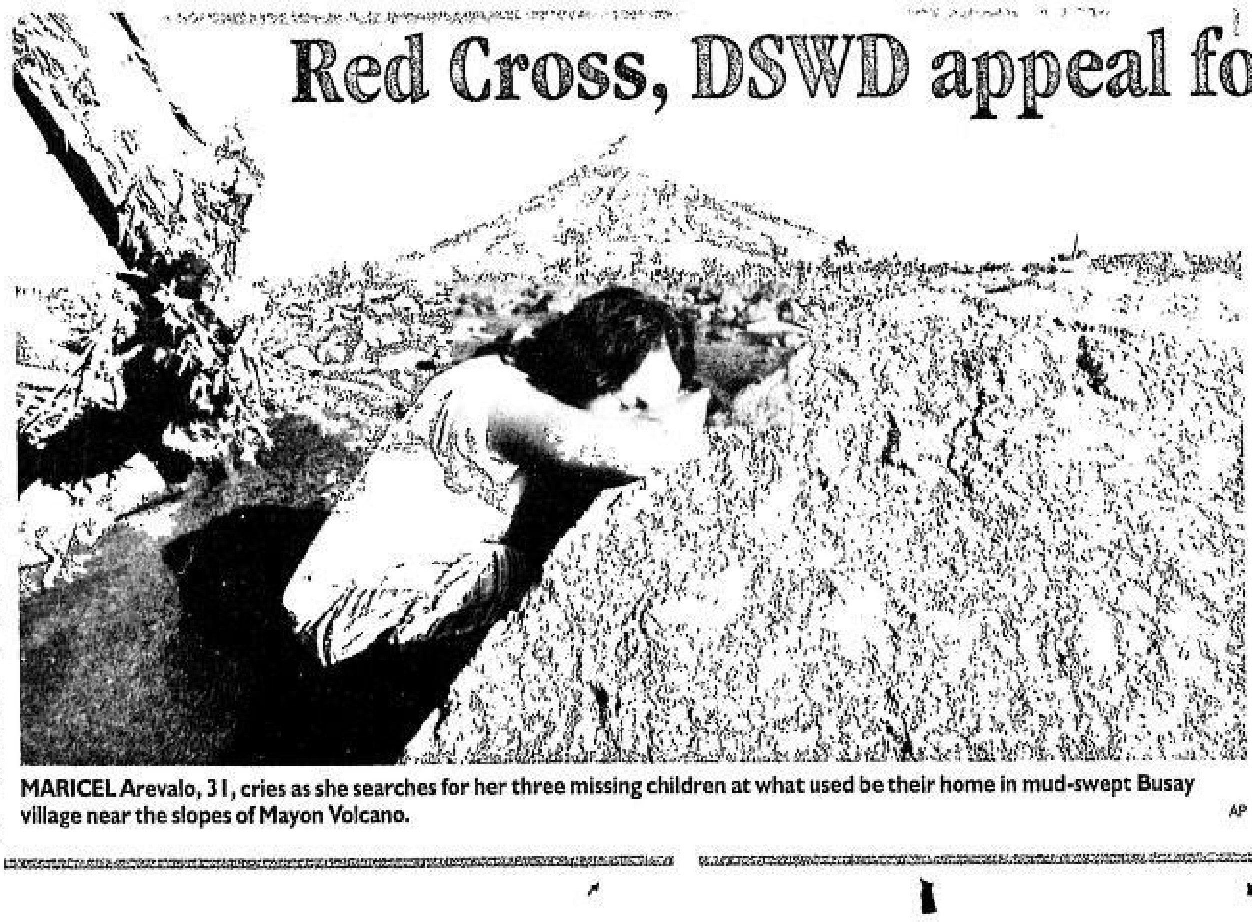
AS FAR AS THE COUNTRY'S VOLCANOLogists are concerned, it was complacency that killed hundreds of people in Albay.

Stung by criticisms hurled in its direction, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the agency had given sufficient warnings and information to allow local governments to prepare for the coming of Supertyphoon "Reming."

"It's very wrong and unfair to blame Phivolcs because we did everything we could," Phivolcs deputy director Bartolome Bautista said yesterday.

He said hazard maps were distributed to the local governments early on and were updated between August and October when Mayon Volcano started to act up again.

PHIVOLCS/ A9



MARICEL Arevalo, 31, cries as she searches for her three missing children at what used be their home in mud-swept Busay village near the slopes of Mayon Volcano. AP

Red Cross, DSWD appeal for relief aid

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Cynthia D. Balana

THE RED CROSS AND THE DEPARTment of Social Welfare and Development have sent out an urgent plea for water, food and medicine for survivors after officials acknowledged five days after Supertyphoon "Reming" struck that it was difficult to retrieve all the bodies from the villages buried by mudflows from Mayon Volcano.

The victims urgently need ready-to-eat food and canned goods, water purifiers and containers, mosquito nets, cooking utensils, flashlights, clothing, beddings, generator sets, flashlights, mats, blankets and gas stoves, according to Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral.

Several countries, including Japan, the United States, Indonesia and Malaysia, have heeded the appeal, sending emergency supplies and equipment.

Two Indonesian Air Force Hercules transport aircraft left earlier yesterday for

RED CROSS/ A8

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The eastern sections of the country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over Eastern Luzon. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/04/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Miriam high court dreams dashed

By Armand N. Nocum

AND THEN THERE WERE FOUR.

This after the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) yesterday narrowed its list of candidates for the post of Supreme Court Chief Justice by removing from contention the names of Associate Justice Antonio Carpio and Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

In the short list of nominees the JBC submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo during a Cabinet meeting yesterday, only the names of Associate Justices Reynato Puno, Leonardo Quisumbing, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez remained.

In a later interview with justice reporters, Sen. Francis Pangilinan, the Senate's representative in the JBC, said Santiago's name was removed from the list because she was considered an "outsider" of the Supreme Court, not being a justice.

"It never happened before that an outsider was appointed Chief Justice. Maybe the judiciary is not yet ready for this kind of change, so Senator Santiago's name did not make it to the short list," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan said Santiago and Carpio were also disqualified after neither of them received the five votes necessary to remain in the list of candidates for Chief Justice obtained in a secret balloting conducted by the JBC.

Puno and Quisumbing each received seven votes, while Ynares-Santiago and Gutierrez got five votes.

This was the second time Santiago was nominated for the position of Chief Justice. Last year, she was among those recommended to succeed Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. but her nomination was made too late.

In a separate interview, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said it was retired Associate Justice Regino Hermosisima who had moved for the elimination from contention of the nominees who had failed to receive five votes from the JBC.

"I moved that the names of all the six candidates be forwarded but I was outvoted. The rule was that only those who received not less than five votes would be included [in the short list]," Gonzalez said.

PANGANIBAN: Under fire PDI PHOTO

Gonzalez also denied that Carpio was removed from the short list because he had authored the majority opinion that dismissed the people's initiative petition that the Arroyo administration had pushed to amend the Constitution.

Pangilinan said Carpio was voted out of the short list because most of the JBC members thought he ,was still "too young" to become the 22nd Chief Justice.

The JBC met yesterday to finalize its short list three days before Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban is set to retire on reaching the mandatory retirement age of 70.

The hour-long JBC meeting also discussed the recommendation to declare a failure of the nomination process after the five nominated incumbent justices failed to show up for public interviews called by the JBC last week.

But Pangilinan said majority of the JBC members felt that there was no more time to insist on the public interviews or to reopen the nomination process since Panganiban was retiring in a matter of days.

Ironically, it was only Senator Santiago who had appeared for the interview.

Hell hath no fury like Miriam scorned

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO IS well-known as someone who does not mince words but yesterday she hit a new low.

After learning that she had been removed from the short list of candidates for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, she lost no time lambasting the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) which had removed her name from contention, called the present high court members idiots and corrupt, and said she was spitting in the face of retiring Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and his mentor, ex-Sen. Jovito Salonga, for conspiring against her.

In a bright yellow dress, Santiago blew into the Senate like Supertyphoon "Reming" yesterday, and delivered a scathing privilege speech attacking the JBC and the Supreme Court.

"I'm not angry, Mr. President, I am not angry," she began, addressing Senate President Manuel Villar.

"I am irate. I am foaming at the mouth. I'm homicidal. I'm suicidal. I'm humiliated, debased, degraded. And not only that, I feel like throwing up to be living my middle years in a country of this nature. I am nauseated. I spit in the face of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and his cohorts in the Supreme Court."

Only minutes earlier, Santiago, unaware the JBC had decided to drop her nomination, learned of it when the INQUIRER contacted her while she was in her car on the way to the Senate.

"Is that so?" she said.

"I will say that I resent it very deeply. I take it very personally and I will see to it that while I remain in public office that every member of the JBC shall eventually be held to account for their partisanship. For this reason, I will participate in the Con-ass (constituent assembly) for the main purpose of abolishing the JBC for corruption," she told the INQUIRER.

MAD MIRIAM. Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago goes ballistic when she learned she was no longer shortlisted for Chief Justice by the Judicial and Bar Council. ROGER MARGALLO

She also made a manifestation on the floor that the Supreme Court's budget be reduced to its 2005 level.

Santiago said Panganiban was the "mastermind of this thinly-veiled plot" to exclude her from the nomination process because she was an "intimate political ally of the President."

She challenged the SC, which she charged had manipulated the JBC, to point to any provision in the Constitution that said an outsider could not be appointed Chief Justice.

"*Wala naman sa loob ng ating Saligang Batas, saan nila kinuha ang kapal ng mukha nila na magsabi na ang mga sarili lang nila ang maaring* Chief Justice *ng korte suprema* (Where in the law of the land did they get their thick-skinned idea that only Supreme Court justices could be Chief Justice)?" she said.

Santiago said Panganiban was against her because his former boss, ex-Senate President Jovito Salonga, was against President Macapagal-Arroyo and wanted her [Santiago] out of the picture for being the Chief Executive's ally.

She said Panganiban had even ordered her to waive her public interview by the JBC to save face for the five incumbent justices who had refused to submit to the interviews.

She said Panganiban had asked Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to tell her to tell the media that she was waiving the interview.

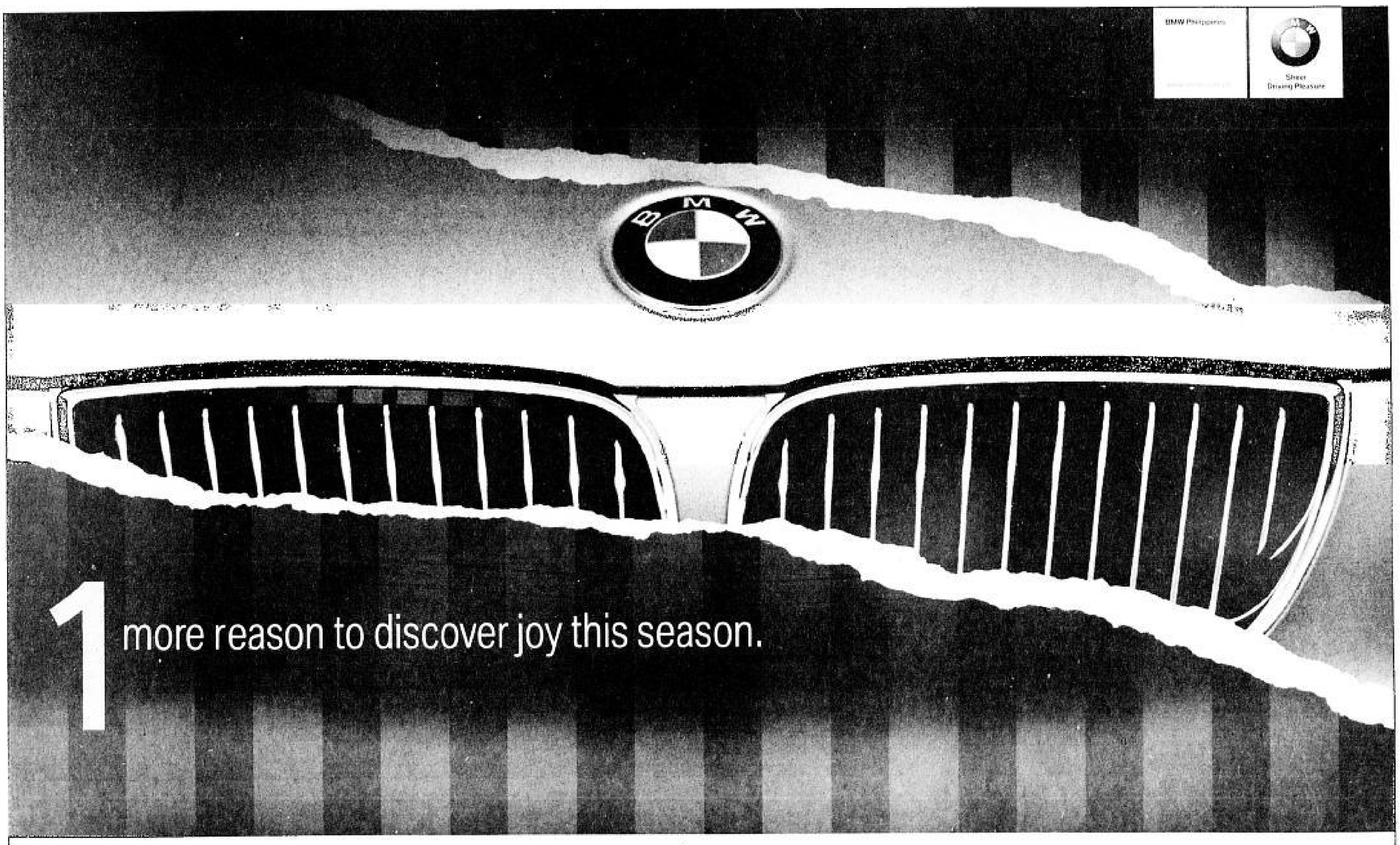
"This Chief Justice, this twisted mind, sent Secretary Gonzalez to me so that their colleagues in the Supreme Court would not be subjected to the scrutiny of the public," she said.

Santiago also questioned Panganiban's own qualifications to be Chief Justice, saying that he was also an outsider.

"*Pinagmamalaki ng* Chief Justice *na ito na naging* bar topnotcher *siya*. Ha, ha, ha," Santiago said, adding that bar topnotchers in the United States were laughed at because this meant they were not doing substantial legal work since they had plenty of time to review for the bar exams.

Santiago said she simply wanted to be nominated to the high court to disabuse the public of the myth that only court insiders could become Chief Justice.

"I said categorically to the President that I could not be appointed Chief Justice because I preferred the company of my colleagues in the Senate anytime, any day, any year to the company of those idiots in the Supreme Court," she said.



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TOP BRASS IN JOLO
US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney (center) at the Jolo Rescue Network Operation Center poses with AFP Chief of Staff, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. and Commander of the US Pacific Command, Admiral William Fallon.

INQUIRER PHOTO/JULIE S. ALIPALA, INQUIRER MINDANAO

Gov't sends 2,000 more troops to Jolo

THE GOVERNMENT SENT AN additional 2,000 Marines to Jolo to bolster an offensive against Muslim rebels Abu Sayyaf sheltering members of regional militant group Jemaah Islamiah.

Since Aug. 1, about 6,000 troops have been fighting several hundred Muslim rebels in the latest bid to flush out Islamic militants on Jolo island.

"We need fresh legs in the hunt for our high value targets," Lt. Col. Ariel Caculitan, a Marine spokesman, told reporters a day after the 2nd Marine Brigade arrived.

"The arrival of fresh Marines on Jolo would boost efforts in cornering and finishing off these terrorists." The Abu Sayyaf's leader, Khaddafy Janjalani, is believed to be hiding on Jolo with two Indonesians suspected of carrying out the 2002 Bali bombings after they were driven out of nearby Mindanao island by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The MILF, the country's largest Muslim rebel group, is in stop-start peace talks with the government and has agreed to help troops fighting other militants.

With small US commando teams providing intelligence to Philippine troops on the ground, Philippine security forces were confident they would soon corner senior Abu Sayyaf commanders.

Reuters

Gov't bares plan to buy 6 night attack helicopters

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (PAF) will acquire 16 more helicopters, six of them night attack helicopters which can operate at night, as part of Armed Forces' equipment upgrade program, a military spokesperson said over the weekend.

Maj. Augusto dela Peña, PAF spokesperson, said they will use funds from the Armed Forces of the Philippines Capability Upgrade Progam (CUP) to buy 10 Huey (UH1H) helicopters worth P40 million each.

A total of 15 percent of the total cost or P6 million will be allotted for "integrated logistics support" for the helicopters which include the purchase of spare parts for the next three years, he said.

Dela Peña added that an additional P1.26 billion would be used for the purchase of six night attack helicopters, whose model Dela Peña said the PAF has yet to identify.

"It has been approved by the President and is part of the General Appropriations Act of 2006," he said.

The purchase of the helicopters would be part of Block 1 of the 1st phase of the CUP. The first six blocks of the program is dedicated for the purchase of "mission essential equipment" for the military to strengthen its internal security operations (ISO). The AFP's ISO is composed mostly of operations against communist rebels Muslim insurgents.

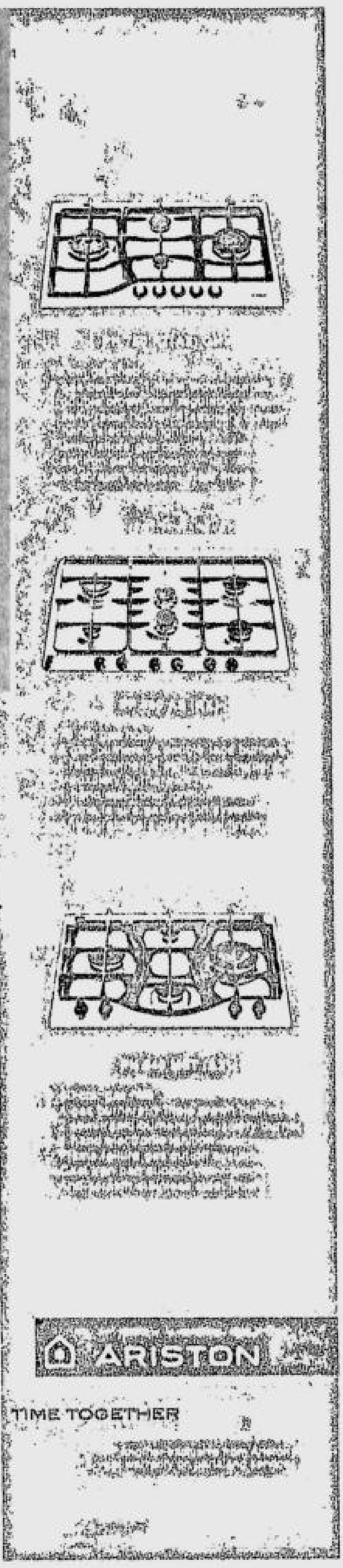
Dela Peña also said President Macapagal-Arroyo has given the Department of National Defense the go signal for the purchase of the equipment.

"The Department of National Defense has approved the Circular of Requirements, as well as the Bid Evaluation Plan for this," he said.

According to the CUP, the PAF is set to acquire 18 primary and eight basic trainer aircraft for their pilots.

The PAF is also set to acquire an additional 17 Huey and six another night capable attack helicopters in the second block of the first phase of CUP.

The first phase of CUP, which started last year, would be implemented until 2011 in which a total of P5 billion annually was allotted.



Caution: Playful banter in the kitchen may cause scratching.

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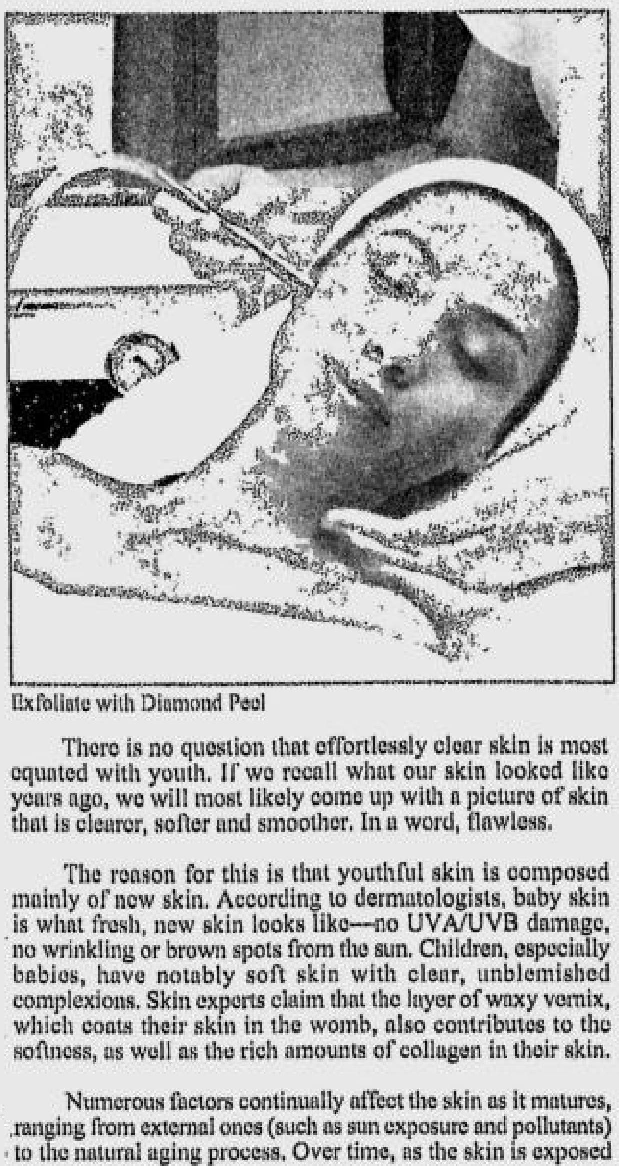

Exfoliate with Diamond Peel

There is no question that effortlessly clear skin is most equated with youth. If we recall what our skin looked like years ago, we will most likely come up with a picture of skin that is clearer, softer and smoother. In a word, flawless.

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Numerous factors continually affect the skin as it matures, ranging from external ones (such as sun exposure and pollutants) to the natural aging process. Over time, as the skin is exposed to various elements, it may acquire blemishes. Dark spots, acne scars and other forms of pigmentation are examples of some imperfections the skin may experience as a result of aging.

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In order to lighten dark, dull skin, there is **FluorOxygen+C**, a whitening breakthrough that makes use of the potent powers of Vitamin C to reverse the darkening of the skin without leaving yellowish or greenish undertones. It can treat dull, lackluster skin, photoaging and other dark spots and discolorations. FluorOxygen+C also contains Vitamins A, C and E which regulate the skin's natural pH level, prevent irritations, dryness and over-sensitive reactions.

To completely even out the skin complexion, the **Collagen Whitening Mask** is a highly recommended solution. It utilizes the benefits of Kojic acid, which is known for its whitening effect. The Collagen Whitening Mask effectively evens out the skin. It also inhibits the formation of melanin, as well as reduces existing melanin in the skin. The collagen in the mask deeply moisturizes the skin to visibly reduce lines and wrinkles, making the skin firm but still dewy, not dull and dry.

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40 years in jail for Smith; 3 GIs acquitted

From page A1

"I'm sad that three were acquitted, but I'm also happy because one was convicted," Nicole later told ABS-CBN television in a telephone interview.

Pozon said his order to keep Smith at the Makati jail was "pending an agreement" between the Philippine and US governments over which facility he should be held in. *(Story on Page A1.)*

The judge acquitted Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis and Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier "for failure of the prosecution to adduce sufficient evidence against (them)."

Like Smith, the three are in their 20s.

Flight out of RP

Less than three hours after they stepped out of the courtroom, Silkwood, Duplantis and Carpentier were flown out of the country.

They left for Japan via a C-12 US military aircraft, the INQUIRER learned.

The four Americans had been under US custody for the duration of their 4-month trial.

Timoteo Soriano, the Filipino who drove the van where the incident occurred as it was cruising around the Subic freeport, never appeared at the trial.

Just before that fateful ride, Smith and Nicole had met at Neptune Club, a popular nightspot in Subic, where Nicole was then vacationing along with a stepsister and another US Marine they had befriended in their native Zamboanga City.

Too drunk to say yes

In essence, Pozon's 63-page ruling pointed out that Smith "knew" Nicole was drunk on the night of the incident and "took advantage" of her condition.

The judge thus gave no credence to Smith's claim that he and Nicole had "consensual" sex.

"The court is morally convinced that accused Smith committed the crime charged," the ruling read.

"He admitted having sexual intercourse with the complainant, who he knew was intoxicated and rendered unconscious by the accumulated effects of the different alcoholic drinks she had previously taken in succession, at the time of the commission of the felony."

In strong language, the ruling added:

"Thus, she could not have consented to the bestial acts of the said accused. Moreover, the resistance and struggle she made against Smith, the shouts she made prior to the commission of the rape also show that she did not consent to his plan of sexually molesting her."

No conspiracy

Silkwood, Duplantis and Carpentier walked free because they could neither be considered "principals" who participated in the rape, nor "accomplices" who knew beforehand of Smith's "criminal design" on Nicole, the court said.

They also could not be considered accessories because "they did not profit ... from the effects of the crime or concealed or destroyed the body of the crime."

The prosecution also failed to prove that the three men "took advantage of their combined strength" to carry out the crime.

The court noted that while the words "F--k, f--k, f--k" and "Coming, coming" were supposedly heard inside the van during the rape, "there was no sufficient proof of who uttered those words."

Moral damages

Even assuming that one of them did, there was no showing that those utterances offered the "strongest kind of temptation for Smith to perpetrate what he did."

Aside from sending Smith to prison, Pozon ordered him to pay Nicole P50,000 in compensatory damages and P50,000 in moral damages.

The ruling appeared to acknowledge that Nicole's hazy memory of the actual rape was understandable.

Quoting Supreme Court jurisprudence, it noted: "Rape as a harrowing experience is usually not remembered in detail."

"For such an offense is not something which enhances one's life and therefore worth recalling or reliving, but rather something which causes deep psychological wounds and casts a stigma upon the victim for the rest of her life, no matter that it was never her fault that she met such fate."

"Rape is chilling naked sadism. It is marked by the savagery and brutality of the assault on the helpless victim's person and privacy," it said.

In his ruling, Pozon said that Smith's claim that the sex was consensual simply "does not inspire belief."

"If it were true ... why would she resist him, evade his kisses, push, fight him back, and shout?" he said.

And "if it were true that the sexual congress ... was with (her) consent, why would she charge him of raping her?" the judge asked rhetorically.

"Even assuming that the complainant voluntarily went with the accused for a short ride, which is not the case here, it does not necessarily mean that she wanted sex with him."

Pozon cited up to 14 points that constituted "circumstantial evidence" against Smith, including:

- That he took her out of the club and into the van, and occupied the backseat with her.
- That he was the one who laid on top of her, forcing her to resist before she "lost consciousness" in her intoxication.
- That Smith "admitted having carnal knowledge" of the woman.
- That Nicole "felt pain in her private parts" after the sex with Smith.
- That her medical examination revealed that she suffered contusions "consistent" with rape; that her private parts were tender when internally probed.
- That her panty and the condom used in the intercourse had the "seminal stains of Smith."
- That the DNA found on those stains "matched" those from Smith's blood.

Interviewed later, Smith's other counsel, Benjamin Formoso, said: "Parts of the case were not properly appreciated. We will file for habeas corpus before the Supreme Court (today)."

Back to their units

In a statement, the US Embassy said that with their acquittal, Carpentier, Duplantis and Silkwood "will return directly to their military unit."

"Their commander will now take action regarding the completion of the US military's own investigation of the case," it said.

The four Marines were part of a US military contingent involved in military exercises when the incident occurred. They had been stationed in Okinawa.

In Jolo, Sulu, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney said: "Obviously, this is a difficult (moment) for everyone involved ... Anyone who was declared guilty, we will obviously then work on that step with their lawyers to determine what their side be."

Militant groups hailed the conviction of Smith as a victory for women's rights. *(Story on Page A1.)*

"We laud the triumph of impartial justice," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. "The court maintained an even keel despite the tremendous pressures upon the bench." *With reports from Nikko Dizon; Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao, and AP*

IN THE KNOW

Nameless rape victims

A PHILIPPINE LAW, KNOWN AS The Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998 (Republic Act No. 8505), says media reporting of rape cases "shall be limited to the basic facts of the case and devoid of sensationalism."

The law says that the name and address of the victim "and other information tending to establish her or his identity shall not be included in the report unless the survivor gives her or his consent in writing."

In a ruling on Sept. 19 involving a rape case, the Supreme Court merely referred to the 8-year-old victim as "AAA." Citing the need to respect the dignity and protect the privacy of women and child victims, it said it resolved to withhold their names and instead use fictitious initials in its decisions.

It also decided not to disclose the personal circumstance of the victims or any other information that would establish their identities, as well as those of their immediate families or household members.

The high court said these were in line with the provisions of the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act (RA 7610) and the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (RA 9262).

These laws seek to maintain the confidentiality of information in cases involving violence against women and children, it pointed out.

JUSTICE FOR NICOLE

PROTESTERS celebrate after hearing the court's guilty verdict on Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Historic court trial ends in high drama

From page A1

ous. We feel that we have shown to the world that we did right in fighting to the end," said the victim's private lawyer, Evalyn Ursua.

"And, of course, we salute Nicole, who did not give up to the very end. We did this not just for Nicole but for every Filipino."

Ursua added: "We laud Judge Pozon for his judicial independence, actually directing the commitment of accused Smith to the Makati City Jail."

She was referring to Judge Benjamin Pozon's order for Smith to be held at the Makati jail pending an agreement between Philippine and US authorities on where the soldier should serve his jail term.

After the guilty verdict was read, an unflinching Pozon looked straight at Smith.

Before then, the judge had kept his head bowed while the court's officer in charge, Jun Sumbilla, was reading the pertinent portions of his decision.

In a last-ditch attempt to spare Smith from detention in a local jail, his lawyer, Ricardo Diaz, asked that his client be allowed to remain in US custody while the case was on appeal.

Defense rebuffed

Pozon quickly rebuffed Diaz, denied the request, and brought down his gavel before the lawyer could make another appeal.

"That's final!" said Pozon as he stood up to signal the end of the roughly 45-minute proceeding.

A visibly confused Smith then found himself caught between US Embassy security officials and local police, who had begun to scuffle for custody of the Marine.

The three other US Marines, who were Smith's coaccused but who had been acquitted, were gathered near the main entrance of the courtroom when the tug-of-war for Smith's custody ensued between the American security people and the Filipino policemen.

By then, the local policemen had surrounded Smith, ready to enforce Pozon's order.

The US guards were seen trying to pull Smith toward the main door, but the Makati police, including Chief Supt. Gilbert Cruz, succeeded in pulling the soldier to another door.

With bulletproof vests

"Their intention was to secure all the accused. Maybe they thought they could still bring him to the US Embassy. Maybe it was a misinterpretation, maybe they didn't hear what the judge said," Cruz said of the American security people.

At least five American guards, all wearing bulletproof vests beneath their suits, had watched over the four accused from the time they arrived in court at 12:53 p.m.

Before the hearing began, they formed themselves into a virtual wall to shield the accused from the view of the people in the gallery.

"They were eventually enlightened about the order, that he (Smith) should be turned over to the Makati City Jail," Cruz told reporters.

Cruz, Chief Insp. Alex Fulgar and other policemen immediately brought Smith to a waiting police car.

Smith was handcuffed and, like any ordinary criminal, was placed in the backseat.

With two American guards beside him, Smith was brought to the Makati Central Police Headquarters for pre-detention "processing," a procedure that involved fingerprinting, mug shot-taking and a medical examination.

'He looked shocked'

"I noticed that he looked shocked," said Cruz, who sat beside Smith inside the police car.

Dr. Dave Dato of the Ospital ng Makati, who examined Smith, said the soldier showed normal vital signs and had a blood pressure reading of 120/80.

The doctor also revealed that the soldier sported several tattoos—one that read "US Marine Corps" on the left side of his chest, a heart on his right upper arm, an eagle on his left upper arm, and a "tribal design" that spanned the upper part of his back.

Smith was then brought to jail in a convoy of six police vehicles, led by armed members of a Special Weapons and Tactics team.

The verdict apparently lifted a huge load off Nicole's shoulders.

Thankful Nicole

"Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord," she said after the decision was read out, according to her psychiatrist, Dr. June Pagaduan-Lopez.

"That was all she kept saying," Lopez told reporters.

"I am very optimistic that Nicole would be able to go on with her life as a 23-year-old and face the future," Lopez said at a press conference.

She said Nicole decided not to appear at the news conference because she and her lawyers wanted to "settle down first."

About 200 protesters from various militant organizations had mixed emotions about the court's decision.

The angry chants and taunts of some turned into happy cheering as they paraded along J.P. Rizal Street, waving colorful flags bearing their organizations' names.

"Long live Nicole, long live the Philippines," they shouted in Filipino.

Partial victory

Addressing the protesters after the promulgation, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. said that although the decision served Nicole only partial justice, Smith's incarceration at the Makati City Jail was a victory that should be celebrated by the Filipinos.

Other ralliers were not as delighted, saying the three coaccused should join Smith in jail.

The crowd showed its indignation by burning a US flag with a message written in black: "Justice for Filipino women and country and junk VFA (Visiting Forces Agreement)."

WHAT WENT BEFORE

KEY EVENTS IN LANDMARK rape trial of US Marines:

Nov. 1, 2005: A 22-year-old Filipino woman files complaint alleging she was raped by a US Marine at Subic Bay, while three other Marines allegedly cheered him on.

Nov. 3: Philippine authorities delay departure of USS Essex while searching for the men. The ship leaves without the Marines, who are placed in US Embassy custody.

Nov. 4: President Macapagal-Arroyo instructs officials "to ensure that justice is done."

Dec. 27: Prosecutors charge the Marines with rape.

Jan. 12, 2006: A Makati judge issues arrest warrant for the Marines.

Jan. 17: The US formally rejects a Philippine request to hand over the Marines, citing provisions of a military pact.

Jan. 19: A Philippine congressional committee approves a nonbinding resolution urging the government to abrogate the pact.

April 28: The Marines refuse to answer rape charges against them, judge enters a not guilty plea for them.

June 2: A security guard at the Neptune bar testifies he saw Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith carry a drunk woman on his back to a van.

June 29: A Filipino doctor tells court the accuser suffered injuries consistent with sexual assault.

July 6: "Nicole" breaks down on the stand as she identifies Smith as her rapist. She says she was too drunk to stop the assault.

July 10: "Nicole" attacks Smith with fists in court while walking to the stand.

July 17: Smith testifies he had consensual sex, says: "I think it's horrible what I've been accused of. This place has taken a year off of my life that I can never get back."

Sept. 20: Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez rules out an out-of-court settlement as squabbles break out between "Nicole" and prosecutors, one of whom calls the accuser and her mother "liars" and "ingrates."

Dec. 4: Smith is convicted of rape, sentenced to 40 years. The three other Marines are acquitted.

AP

2 Marine colonels cleared

TWO MARINE COLONELS who were cleared of involvement in the foiled February coup have been released from detention, Navy spokesman Giovanni Bacordo announced yesterday.

Marine officers Lt. Col. Reynaldo Ocsan and Martin Villasan were released from their custodial house in the Bonifacio Naval Station in Fort Bonifacio last Nov. 29, ahead of six Army Scout Ranger officers who were similarly absolved by a military pre-trial investigating board.

Ocsan was the deputy Marine commandant for intelligence while Villasan was deputy commandant for personnel.

Bacordo said the two officers were exonerated and are now waiting for their new assignments.

They were released from detention on orders of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

Meanwhile, six Scout Ranger officers who were also cleared of mutiny charges remain detained at the headquarters of the Army 2nd Infantry Division in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

They are Maj. Oriel Pangcog, Capt. George Malones and 1Lt. Antonio Timbal, Jerald Reyes, Mario Bautista and Michael Cuarteros.

"We're still waiting for the release order," said Army spokesman Maj. Ernesto Torres.

Dona Pazzibugan

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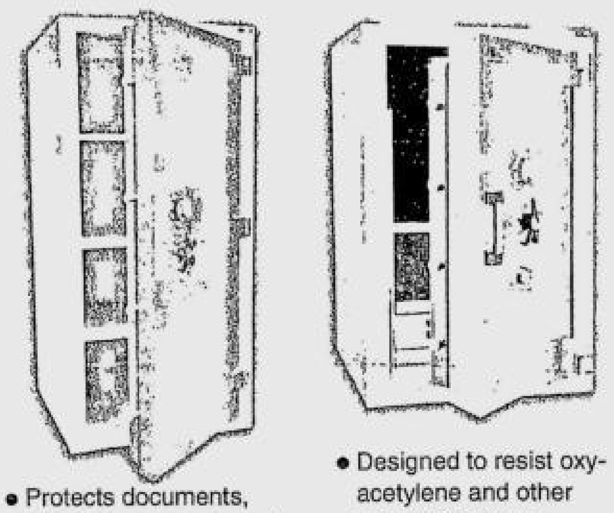

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Where to jail convict stirs anew controversy over VFA provision

From page A1

returned to the custody of the US Embassy in line with the spirit of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

In a telephone interview, Gonzalez told the INQUIRER that the Philippines must honor the VFA provision that says "custody remains with the Americans for as long as the judicial process is not terminated."

"We have to respect the VFA," he said after the verdict on Smith was handed down. He said this VFA provision would come into play only after Smith appeals the case before a higher court.

Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said the Department of Foreign Affairs was coordinating its position on the case with the Department of Justice.

The US Embassy said it would abide by the VFA provisions with regard to Smith's custody.

"We're looking at the situation right now. We will continue to follow the VFA until the completion of the judicial proceedings," Matthew Lussenhop, embassy spokesperson, told the INQUIRER in a phone i [illegible] He said the VFA spelled out what the two governments should do.

US custody acceptable

Gonzalez said he shared the view of those who took the VFA provision to mean that "custody should remain with the Americans in the duration of judicial proceedings" and that an "appeal is a judicial proceeding."

"The leftist and progressives will demand that the American be jailed in our own prisons ... but the VFA says that during the period of appeal and until the end of the judicial proceedings, the United States will take custody of the accused," Gonzalez said.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee and cochair of the joint Legislative Oversight Committee on the VFA (Lovfa), said the verdict showed that "justice has been served."

"It will be acceptable for the convict to remain where he is now because it has been mutually agreed upon by both sides," Santiago said, referring to the US Embassy custody of Smith. She said this arrangement could continue "until the decision has become final and executory."

Both Santiago and Gonzalez stressed that while the US Embassy could continue to take custody of Smith, the American should not be taken outside the Philippines.

The Philippines and the United States had a verbal and legal tussle last year over the custody of Smith and the others accused—Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier and Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis—who were acquitted yesterday and were to return to their original base in Okinawa, Japan.

The Philippine government, backed by progressive and militant groups, had asked that the accused be detained by local authorities, but the US Embassy request prevailed.

When do proceedings end?

However, Gonzalez said that as in the earlier ruckus over the issue of custody, there may still be debates over the provision of the VFA that states that the United States may have custody of the accused "up to the end of the judicial proceedings."

"That is precisely an issue, when do you consider it the end of the proceedings? Some people say the proceeding ends after the trial at the regional trial court, others say it ends after appeal ... at the final conviction (before the Supreme Court)," Gonzalez said.

Still, he said that custody also technically rested in the Philippines and that the burden of asking for custody rests on the Americans.

"It is up for the Americans to insist they have custody, as far as we are concerned, custody belongs to us ... but the United States can ask for certain conditionalities where detention should be made," Gonzalez said.

The conviction is not yet final and there are still 15 days for appeal, he added.

Gonzalez said he was satisfied with the decision. "I think it is about time we put a closure and accepted the verdict," he said.

Gonzalez also said the verdict proved that the DOJ prosecutors had done their jobs, contrary to the criticisms of the rape victim and her relatives.

"The prosecutors succeeded in prosecuting the case. I think they should be satisfied with that," he said, referring to Nicole and her family and supporters.

Gonzalez also said the acquittal of Smith's fellow defendants was a vindication for him, having earned harsh criticism for downgrading the case against Silkwood, Carpentier and Duplantis from "co-principals" to accessory.

"That was my position from the beginning. From the beginning, I did not see conspiracy," he said.

Muntinlupa Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, a Lovfa member, said Smith's conviction was a "first round victory with the issue of where (Smith) will serve his penal term the next round to be fought."

"The treaty should be revised to make sure US servicemen convicted of crimes in the Philippines should serve their prison sentence in the country," he said.

Scrapping of VFA urged

Leftist lawmakers called for the outright scrapping of the VFA.

"Our court should not make Smith's punishment a subject of bargaining," said party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo.

But Biazon and House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles cautioned against scrapping the agreement just because of the Subic rape case.

"I don't think that's enough reason to scrap it. We have compelling interests here, particularly the fight against terrorism," Biazon said.

"The fault of one citizen can't be made the responsibility of an entire country. Same with Filipinos who commit crime abroad. They ought not to reflect on our entire citizenry or country," Nograles said.

Amado Valdez, dean of the University of the East College of Law, conceded that the VFA provided an exception to the rule that judicial process must be followed and that Smith should be imprisoned locally.

"If his lawyers want him to remain in the custody of the US Embassy, they have to request and pray for it," said Valdez. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Philip C. Tubeza, Nikko Dizon and Norman Bordadora*

Opposition stalls Cha-cha express

From page A1

amend the House rule that requires that proposals to amend the Constitution must be approved separately by the House and the Senate in the same manner that a bill is passed.

Minority Leader Francis Escudero attempted to shift the debate to more urgent measures to aid victims of Supertyphoon "Reming" in Bicol.

"While realpolitik may dictate that (the administration congressmen) should pursue their own selfish motives and interest, real life dictates that there is a pressing need that has to be addressed by the government," said Escudero.

Section 105 of Rule 15 reads: "Proposals to amend or revise the Constitution shall be by a resolution which may be filed at any time by any member. The adoption of resolutions proposing amendments to or revision of the Constitution shall follow the procedure for the enactment of bills."

Last week, Senior Deputy Majority Leader Arthur Defensor moved to delete the second sentence to read simply as: "Proposals to amend or revise the Constitution shall be by a resolution which may be filed at any time by any member."

By omitting the sentence, the majority now says that any resolution on constitutional amendment should not go through the usual legislative mill which requires the separate concurrence of the Senate, which is against Con-ass.

The debates continued last night, but majority leaders remained confident that the issue would be resolved and the plan to convene a Senate-less Con-ass remained on track, beginning possibly on Wednesday.

No middle ground

Deputy Minority Leader Gilbert Remulla of Cavite said the move to convene a Con-ass was historic since Speaker Jose de Venecia would not seek a middle ground.

"He has no more choice," said Remulla, claiming that the Speaker's ambition to be prime minister could "bastardize the House beyond recognition."

"Respect for rules, procedure and precedence has no place in JDV's (De Venecia's) Con-ass train. What is more worrying is that the majority of members are willing to turn a blind eye to all of this," Remulla claimed.

De Venecia could not be reached for comment yesterday but he told the INQUIRER over the weekend that he was not gung-ho on becoming a prime minister.

"I've seen all. I've served this country in so many capacities," he said.

"It's not about me—it's about the future of this country. It's not ambition to be prime minister that is the driving force behind this reform movement rather it is the need to change the structure of our government that has sidetracked economic reforms."

Politics must begin to work

De Venecia also took a swipe at opponents of Charter change (Cha-cha), who "never explained why they are for a presidential system, nor discussed the disadvantages of a parliamentary government."

"They attacked our person, but they have never explained their stand," he said.

The Speaker said the country's leaders must make politics "begin to work not just for politicians—and not just for the rich—but for every citizen," raising fears that the Philippines might forever remain underdeveloped amid constant threats of military rule and destabilization.

"Whether our country is to have a new beginning, or stay in the same political rut in which it has been trapped this half-century, this question is in your hands," he said.

'Brazen, unprecedented'

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez described the majority move as "brazen and unprecedented" and "in utter disregard of custom, practice and tradition of the House and international parliamentary practice."

He explained that a one-day written notice should be given to House members before such an amendment to the House rules could be put to a vote on the floor.

And it should be the rules committee that should make the motion, not just any member, he said.

"The motion to amend and the proposed amendment trivialize the rule-making process in the House," said Golez.

De Venecia and the House majority coalition are relying on the vague provision of Article 17, Section 1 of the Constitution, in insisting that only three-fourths of "all the members of Congress," or 195, is needed to constitute itself into a Con-ass.

KNOCKOUT CON-ASS!
KNOCKOUT CON-ASS!

WEARING a mask of Speaker Jose de Venecia, a member of a militant group joins a protest action in front of the House of Representatives to condemn the constituent assembly proposed by administration lawmakers to change the Constitution. JOAN BONDOC

Con-ass by Dec. 15

The Senate is adamant on its stand that voting on any proposal to amend the Charter should be done with the two chambers separately in keeping with the bicameral nature of the present legislature.

With the haste with which the House is driving the Cha-cha express, De Venecia expects a newly minted Constitution which will allow Ms Arroyo to "share powers" with a prime minister and "merge both the Senate and the House" into a one-chamber body, among other changes, ready by Dec. 15.

Anticipating the intense debate that will ensue on the floor, Secretary General Roberto Nazareno over the weekend informed Escudero that the chamber would conduct sessions from Monday to Friday.

Just like the Senate, the House holds session from Monday to Wednesday while the rest of the week is reserved for committee hearings and constituency work.

RP-US forces try soft tack vs Abu terrorists

From page A1

Rather, the patchwork of shaded circles and ovals across the figure-eight-shaped island of Jolo bespeaks a different kind of warfare, one that Washington hopes will finally end Abu Sayyaf terrorist activities that have long plagued the Sulu archipelago.

"This is not about firing shots. This is about changing the conditions that give rise to terrorism," said Col. David Maxwell, commander of the US Joint Special Forces Task Force.

Where traditional tactics might dictate heavy deployment of troops, or destruction of local villages that can harbor insurgents, Filipino and American planners seek to use "soft power" to win over local residents and deny Abu Sayyaf terrorists a place to hide.

As a result, the task force's briefing room map is dotted with circles—strategically placed across the island of Jolo to cut off suspected enemy positions. Each denotes a new school or road, a medical mission to a remote village, a water project.

Longer-term programs include the reform of Philippine security forces, large-scale economic development, and political empowerment of the disenfranchised Muslim minority in this predominantly Catholic country.

US officials say their approach in Jolo is based on a successful turnaround that began in 2002 in neighboring Basilan.

A difficult test

Today, Basilan, which once tied down 15 Filipino battalions, requires just two. A local fast-food chain opened an outlet there in a widely hailed sign of "normality."

But skeptics say Jolo might not prove so pliant, and some are increasingly impatient for outright victory over the Abu Sayyaf terrorists who have turned to kidnapping and banditry.

"This has dragged on for years and years and has involved a hell of a lot of money," said US-based analyst Zachary Abuza, speaking by telephone from Boston.

Abuza blames restrictions on US troops, who are barred by the Philippine Constitution from direct combat, and corruption in the Armed Forces of the Philippines for what he says is a lack of tangible progress.

The facts on the ground also pose a problem.

Jolo is home to the archipelago's dominant warrior tribe, the Tausug. It is awash in guns, from World War II vintage to the latest models. The island is far poorer than Basilan, and resentment at America's past colonial domination of the region still runs deep.

Jolo also features treacherous terrain that makes road-building and other projects much harder. Covering 500 meters on foot in some areas can take a soldier hours, while thick foliage provides plenty of hiding places.

Most important, Jolo has emerged as the last stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf. A handful of Indonesian comrades wanted in connection with the Bali bombings and other attacks back home have also sought shelter on the island.

"Basilan was a huge success, but Jolo makes its neighbor look like child's play," said one Western military analyst who asked not to be identified because he works closely with his Filipino counterparts.

Measure of success

According to Philippine intelligence sources, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) has seen its leadership cut off from the rank and file, some of whom have begun to surrender quietly rather than face life on the run through unforgiving jungle.

But authorities also acknowledge that the remaining leaders and their Indonesian allies from Jemaah Islamiyah, Southeast Asia's biggest militant group, have highly tuned survival skills, and they have been busy building bombs for future attacks.

"Our reporting suggests that until recently the Indonesians were daily making IEDs (improvised explosive devices)," an intelligence source said, adding that recent military pressure had likely disrupted the bomb-making operations.

"We believe there are about 30 active Indonesians or other Southeast Asians with the ASG, about eight to 10 of whom are traveling with (Abu Sayyaf chief Khadaffy) Janjalani," the source said. Overall, the ASG is estimated at about 250 active fighters.

Among those being hunted on Jolo is the Indonesian militant Dulmatin, who is wanted in connection with the Bali bombings. Security forces recently detained his wife, but Dulmatin remains elusive.

American and Filipino officials bristle at the notion that the true mark of success in Jolo is the arrest or killing of Janjalani, Dulmatin and other so-called high-value targets.

"Why haven't we found Osama bin Laden?" retorts one US officer. "The goal here is keep the bad guys off the battlefield, whether we kill them, capture them, or isolate them so they can't move."

Still, members of the US mission know that they—not their Filipino hosts—will be judged on the success or failure of the mission.

"We are the 800-pound gorilla in the room," said one senior officer. *Reuters*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, December 5, 2006
1st Week of Advent

1st Reading: Is 11:1-10
Gospel: Luke 10:21-24

Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and made them known to the little ones. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. I have been given all things by my Father, so that no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and he to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Then Jesus turned to his disciples and said to them privately, "Fortunate are you to see what you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings would have liked to see what you see but did not, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

Commentary

The one sent by God is blessed with the fullness of the Spirit and gifts that are used for judging the poor with justice and care for the land's afflicted. His presence brings peace among enemies, and the power of the child of God to lead and guide them together: this peace is knowledge of God that will be like a signal flare for the entire world. Jesus is the beloved child of God, and we are all God's beloved children in baptism. And our God seeks to reveal hidden mysteries and knowledge of the Father, Son and Spirit to us. Are we listening and seeing what is given to us?

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THE LANDMARK

Red Cross, DSWD appeal …

From page A1

the Philippines, carrying 25 tons of aid, including food, medicine, clothes and cooking oil.

The official casualty count in eight provinces in Southern Tagalog (Region 4-A), Mimaropa (Region 4-B) and Bicol (Region 5) rose to 450 dead, 599 missing and 507 injured, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) said in a report as of noon yesterday.

In Albay alone, 392 people were confirmed dead, 591 missing and 151 injured.

Twenty-nine were reported killed and 184 injured in Camarines Sur; 11 killed, 121 injured and three missing in Catanduanes; 14 killed, 34 injured and five missing in Quezon province; two killed and 12 injured in Marinduque; two killed in Oriental Mindoro, and five injured in Occidental Mindoro.

As of yesterday, about 20,200 persons or 4,222 families were still staying in evacuation centers, according to the NDCC.

Accurate figures were hard to come by because power lines and phone services were still down.

P3.67B in IRA released

The Department of Budget and Management said it would release earlier than scheduled P3.67 billion in Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) to provinces hit by Reming.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said the amount would be in the bank accounts of local governments by tomorrow.

"Given the calamity which had hit our countrymen in Bicol and Southern Tagalog, we are expediting the release in one installment, pursuant to the instructions of the President," Andaya said in a statement.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Sunday declared a state of national calamity, allowing the government to rapidly release funds needed to bolster search and rescue efforts.

Power, communications and water facilities remained out of service across most of Bicol, further hampering relief efforts, as more tales of tragedy and loss came in.

In Albay's battered capital of Legazpi City, residents lined up to buy drinking water, gasoline and food.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque urged residents to boil water before drinking to prevent the possible spread of cholera and diarrhea. No outbreaks have been reported so far.

"Many residents take their water from deep wells. We hope they boil the water before drinking," he said.

The NDCC said a total of 66,191 houses were destroyed while 134,973 others were damaged. The figures did not include houses that were buried by mudflows that rushed down the slopes of Mayon.

Damage to agriculture was initially placed at P251 million, while damage to roads, bridges and schools was placed at P23 million. The NDCC said entire crops of banana, rice, coconut and mango in Marinduque were destroyed.

Church asks for help

The auxiliary bishop of Legazpi, Lucilo B. Quiambao, appealed for food, medicine, clothing, household needs and funds for rebuilding homes.

"Please do extend your support to alleviate the plight of those most affected and least served," Quiambao and Fr. Jovic E. Lobrigo, board chair of the city's Social Action Center, said in a letter to men and women of goodwill.

Lobrigo said he could be contacted at cell phone Nos. 0918-5146848 and 0917-8803129.

For cash donations, Lobrigo and Quiambao said donors could deposit in the Social Action Center-SPM Account No. 0851-0067-37, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Albay branch.

For goods and other help from Metro Manila and nearby areas, these can be coursed through the Shelmed Cottage Treasures, 843 Balagtas St., (between Araullo and Shaw Boulevard), Mandaluyong City 1553, with telephone Nos. 727-3477, 726-4225 (Med, 0917-5213883; Mesh, 0921-4093218; Angel, 0917-8981206).

"All donations will be properly acknowledged. We will be deeply grateful for your solidarity with the suffering people of Albay," the priests said.

Foreign assistance

Pledges for international assistance have come in since Ms Arroyo declared a state of national calamity.

Ireland yesterday announced immediate funding of 300,000 euros ($397,000) while the United States gave a cash contribution of $250,000.

Japan has decided to send about 20 million yen ($173,000) of emergency supplies, including tents and blankets. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed his condolences to Ms Arroyo.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono called up Ms Arroyo to express his condolences after sending a letter on Sunday.

In a letter to Ms Arroyo, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said the city-state would be sending humanitarian supplies to help with the relief efforts.

Australia has pledged $1 million, while Canada has allocated Cdn$1 million (US$873,477) for relief efforts in the country.

International Cooperation Minister Josée Verner said Cdn$500,000 more would be allocated to support local organizations in facilitating the recovery of affected families and addressing disaster preparedness needs.

The United Nations and the Italian Embassy have also signified intentions to send aid. Russian President Vladimir Putin, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and the Spanish government sent condolences and sympathies to Ms Arroyo.

To date, the Department of Social Welfare and Development said it had provided food and other goods worth P14.8 million to affected local government units. *With reports from Margaux C. Ortiz, Michelle V. Remo, Nikko Dizon, AP, Reuters and AFP*

OCD lists 407 dead in Bicol

ON THE FOURTH DAY OF SEARCH AND recovery operations, the death toll continued to rise in Bicol.

The regional Office of Civil Defense said the number of fatalities in Albay, Catanduanes and Camarines Sur had reached 407 as of 9 a.m. yesterday.

In Albay alone, the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council placed the total body count at 438—104 in Legazpi City; 79 in Daraga; 17 in Sto. Domingo; 180 in Guinobatan; 8 in Ligao City; 3 in Pio Duran; 26 in Camalig; 9 in Malilipot; 11 in Rapu-Rapu, and one in Tabaco City.

The PDCC said the causes of deaths were drowning, mudflows, landslides, heart attacks, or due to flying objects.

A total of 591 were reported still missing. Daraga had the most number of missing at 210, followed by Guinobatan, 200; Legazpi, 168; Sto. Domingo, 14, and Camalig, 4.

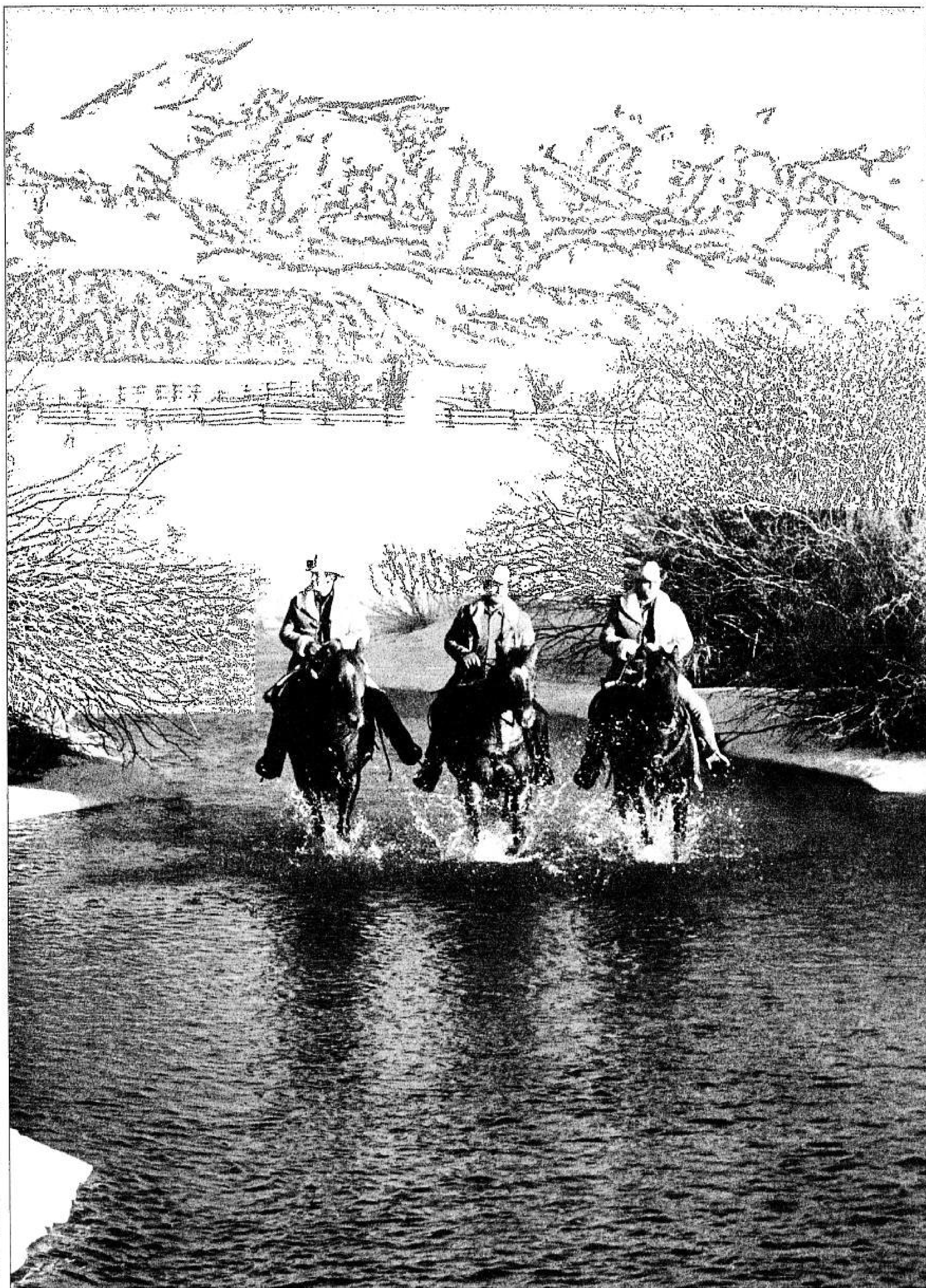
A total of 1,140 persons were reported injured.

As of yesterday, the PDCC said 3,738 families or 17,593 people were still in different evacuation centers in Albay.

In Catanduanes, the OCD reported that 4,834 houses were destroyed; Camarines Sur, 823, and Albay, 303.

Damaged houses numbered 4,636 in Catanduanes; 1,677 in Camarines Sur, and 329 in Albay.

The OCD partial report said damage to agriculture in Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon reached more than P400 million. *Reports from Gina Rodriguez and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



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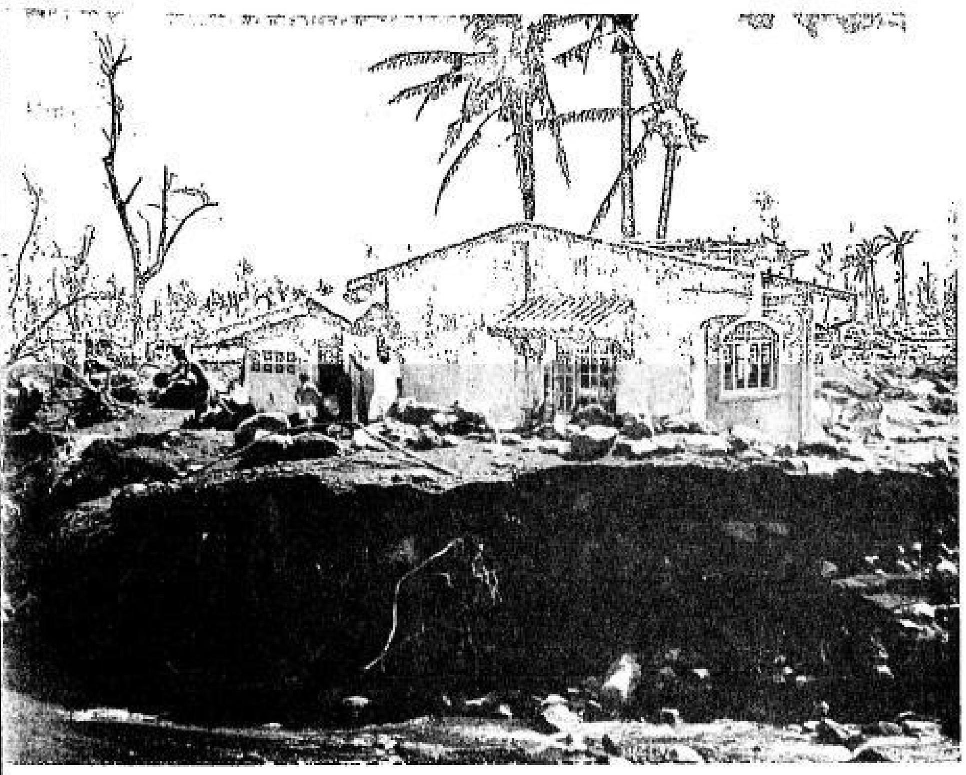


FARMER Antonio Gaupo stands close to his damaged house on the edge of a river in Barangay Padang, Legazpi City, after Supertyphoon "Reming" sent volcanic mud and other debris rampaging through farms, villages and roads in Albay last. week. AFP

Phivolcs says complacency caused supertyphoon deaths

From page A1

The people, however, had apparently become complacent after surviving Typhoon "Milenyo," the first of four typhoons that recently battered Bicol.

"It was the lack of awareness of the people," Bautista said. "Pagasa (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration) gave sufficient warnings that the supertyphoon could trigger landslides and mudslides, but the people became complacent because they knew there had been Milenyo before and nothing happened to them."

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda earlier said Phivolcs should have raised an alert on possible lahar flows and recommended forced evacuation, but it did not give any advice. Salceda has called for an investigation of the agency.

Bautista, however, maintained that Phivolcs had always explained in its bulletins that lahar flows were possible during a heavy downpour, and that local officials were aware of this.

"There were hazard maps, advisories, seminars for local officials ... We did everything. Phivolcs was not lacking in its duties," he said.

He said it was incorrect to associate the mudflows that killed and injured hundreds in several villages in Albay to the activity of Mayon, which has been on Alert 1, the lowest level indicating that there was no threat of hazardous eruption, since Oct. 25.

The Phivolcs last issued an advisory on Mayon's activity on Oct. 25, lowering the alert level from two to one after the number of volcanic earthquakes decreased to one to three per day.

"Volcanic tremors associated with magma movement within the volcano conduit as well as those related with the extrusion of lava from the active vent, lava collapse and rock falls became scarce and most of the time (had) no record at all," Phivolcs said in its bulletin.

It also warned that the 7-kilometer extended danger zone (EDZ) at the southeastern flank of the volcano, where most of the dead were found, had remained off-limits due to the possible sudden small explosions, rock falls and pyroclastic flows of newly deposited lavas at the upper and middle slopes.

"Active river channels and those areas perennially identified as lahar-prone in the southeast sector should also be avoided especially during bad weather conditions or when there is heavy and prolonged rainfall," the agency had said.

Bautista noted that the damage and deaths were reported mostly in the areas identified in the hazard maps as highly vulnerable areas.

"When there is a low alert, we just reiterate the warning that they should watch out for lahar flows and flash floods. The local governments already know that," he said.

"Definitely somewhere, there was a weak part in the system, which we need to evaluate, but now is not the time. We can think later how to improve the system," he said.

Ash deposits

The Phivolcs has sent six people from the central office in Quezon City to check the remaining ash deposits on the slopes of the volcano and assess the situation in the surrounding communities.

The Department of Public Works and Highways was also blamed for the tragedy.

Guinobatan Mayor Juan Garcia said the DPWH dredging project in his town caused the deaths of more than 100 residents.

Because of the dredging, Maipon became the catch basin of mudflows and floodwaters when Reming battered Bicol on Nov. 30, Garcia said.

Ebdane blames rainfall

But Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane said the amount of rainfall was to blame for the tragedy.

He said the eight-hour rainfall (466 millimeters) loosened volcanic debris and caused the mudflow.

"Even a virgin rainforest can only hold 17 inches of rain," he said.

Ebdane said that based on his inspection, many gullies on Mayon had erosions similar to landslides that flowed toward towns in Albay, with Guinobatan being the hardest hit.

He noted that the most affected areas in Guinobatan were near the river.

"I suspect the culprit is the over saturation of Mt. Mayon and that resulted to the erosion along gullies," he said.

P15B for preparedness

President Macapagal-Arroyo is putting up a P15-billion fund to fortify the country's preparedness and defenses against typhoons and natural disasters in the wake of the rising death toll and property damage arising from typhoons and other natural disasters.

"We must not leave things to fatal luck when we can develop the tool to prevent harm. The death and destruction in the wake of calamities can be minimized and reorganized in systematic human intervention," said the President in a speech during the launching of the United Nations Development Program global human development report.

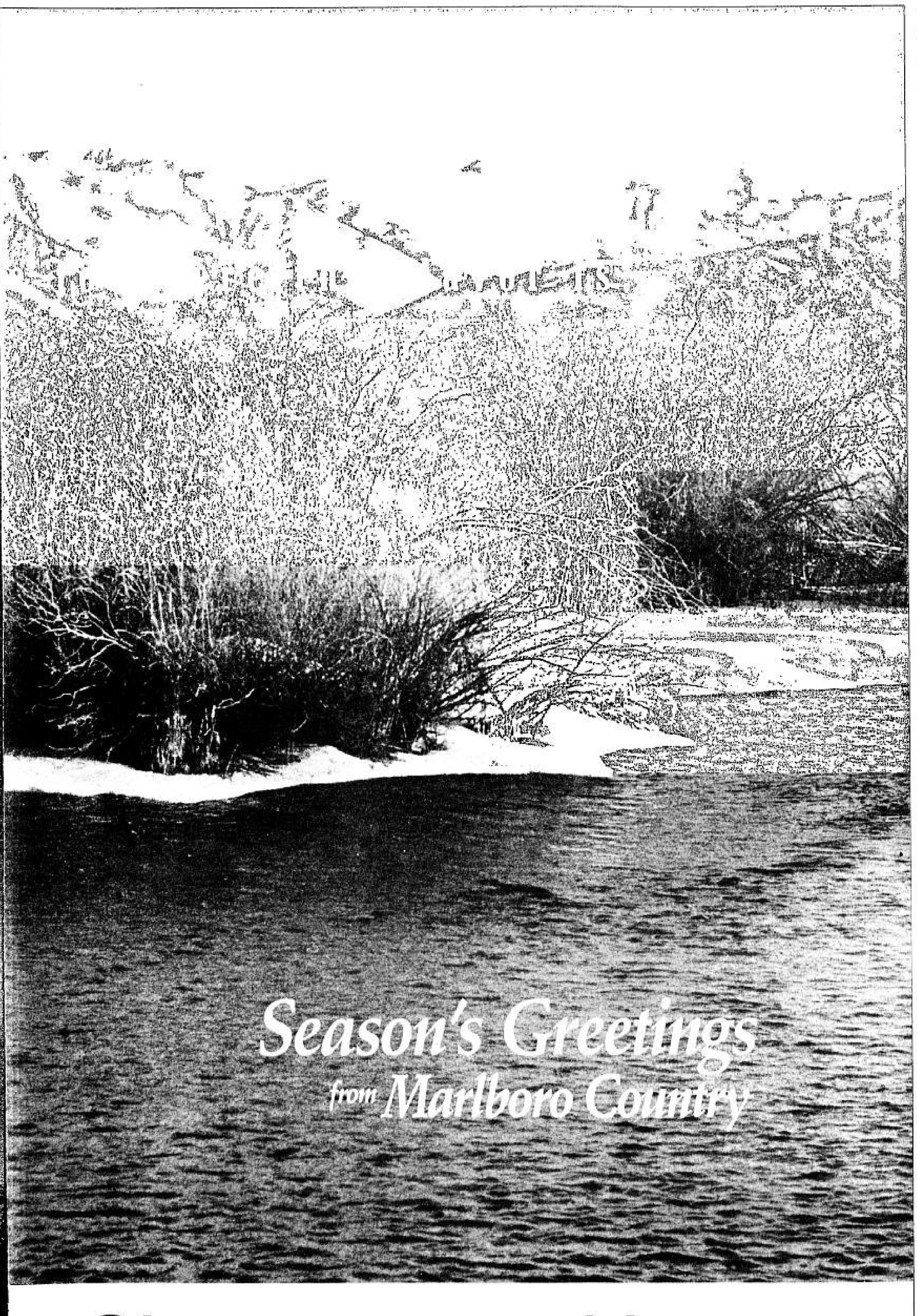
International experts yesterday urged countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the most disaster-prone part of the world, to set aside one percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) for infrastructure development to support disaster prevention and mitigation.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Unescap) said a study that was concluded early this year revealed that the Asia Pacific needed an ideal investment of $39 billion to cope with the disasters that come its way.

From 1900 to 2005, the region accounts for 91 percent of deaths and 49 percent of economic damage due to natural disasters in the world, highlighting the great socioeconomic impact of disasters on the Asia Pacific.

"Regional efforts are necessary to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, which have profoundly affected many countries in Asia and the Pacific," Unescap representative Le Huu Ti said in his speech at the opening of the 39th session of the World Meteorological Organization's typhoon committee.

The typhoon committee comprising 14 countries convened in Manila yesterday. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*



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Disaster mitigation

EDITORIAL

SOME OF THE MOST FATAL AND DESTRUCTIVE TYphoons to ever hit the country in recent times struck this year, killing an estimated 1,293 people, leaving 389 missing and injuring 1,061. The typhoons damaged P6.4 billion in agricultural crops, P2.9 billion worth of public works, 625,774 houses and eight fishing boats.

These figures point up what we and most of the world already know: that the Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. Located on the edge of the Pacific Ring of Fire, the Philippines is vulnerable to earthquakes (at least six a day, but most so weak that they are not noticed), and volcanic eruptions from 18 active volcanoes. Lying smack in the center of what may be called the Pacific "typhoon belt," the Philippines is battered every year by an average of 20 tropical cyclones.

Analysts this week said that rising poverty and climate change are making the problem of disaster-prone Philippines steadily worse. It's like the problem of Sisyphus; a region devastated by a typhoon, an earthquake, a flood or a volcanic eruption has hardly recovered from a disaster when it is struck again by another catastrophe. One way to avoid death and destruction, it is said, is for people in the disaster-prone areas to leave for other places, but the sad reality is that they are too poor to leave the dangerous areas where they earn their living.

The bad news is that, according to Greenpeace and other environmental groups, more violent weather disturbances could be expected as a dire consequence of continuing climate change. Is the country prepared for this, and what is the government doing to at least mitigate the effects of bad weather?

The massive destruction caused by recent supertyphoons "Milenyo," "Paeng" and "Reming" "should serve as a wakeup call about the need for governments to find ways to avert or mitigate the catastrophic impacts of extreme weather events which scientists predict could become more severe because of climate change," Abigail Jabines, climate and energy campaigner for Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said.

The government has to take precautionary measures now and not later. Disasters can strike any time and their occurrence cannot be predicted with a high degree of accuracy. But their effects can be mitigated if people can be put out of harm's way. For instance, the deaths in Albay could have been minimized had the people living near Mayon Volcano been given timely warning about the possibility of the occurrence of mudslides.

Last May, people in a coastal area in Santo Domingo, Albay went through a tsunami evacuation exercise. Exercises like this should regularly be conducted in disaster-prone areas to make people aware of the need for preparedness and quick action.

Right now, one-day weather forecasts are considered 87 percent (at least in the United States); two-day forecasts are correct up to 80 percent of the time. It may be impossible to achieve a 100 percent accuracy in weather forecasting. But it would certainly help if the government could obtain more state-of-the-art equipment to enable meteorologists to make more accurate forecasts so that they can give areas at risk sufficient warning.

Science Undersecretary Graciano Yumul recently said that if the government could install two Doppler radars costing P100 million each, the weather bureau could give more accurate warnings. "We can predict how much rain will fall in a particular area and we'll easily know if there will be a landslide, flash flood or floods," he said.

A massive reforestation project, concentrating on flood-prone areas like Quezon province, Leyte, Samar and Metro Manila, could help greatly in reducing the severe effects of flooding during the rainy season. Such a project would have the additional benefit of protecting watersheds and thus ensure an adequate supply of water for irrigation and household purposes.

On the international level, the Philippine government could propose at the coming Asean Summit certain measures designed to mitigate the effects of climate change in the region. Severe climate changes are affecting most heavily the poor countries in Asia; it's time the developed countries that are principally responsible for the release of the greenhouse gases that cause global warming were made to change their harmful ways.

We cannot change the fact of our geographic location; we will always be in the Pacific Ring of Fire and the Pacific "typhoon belt." But we can disseminate disaster information more widely, upgrade our forecasting equipment and technology and instill the need for disaster preparedness in our people.

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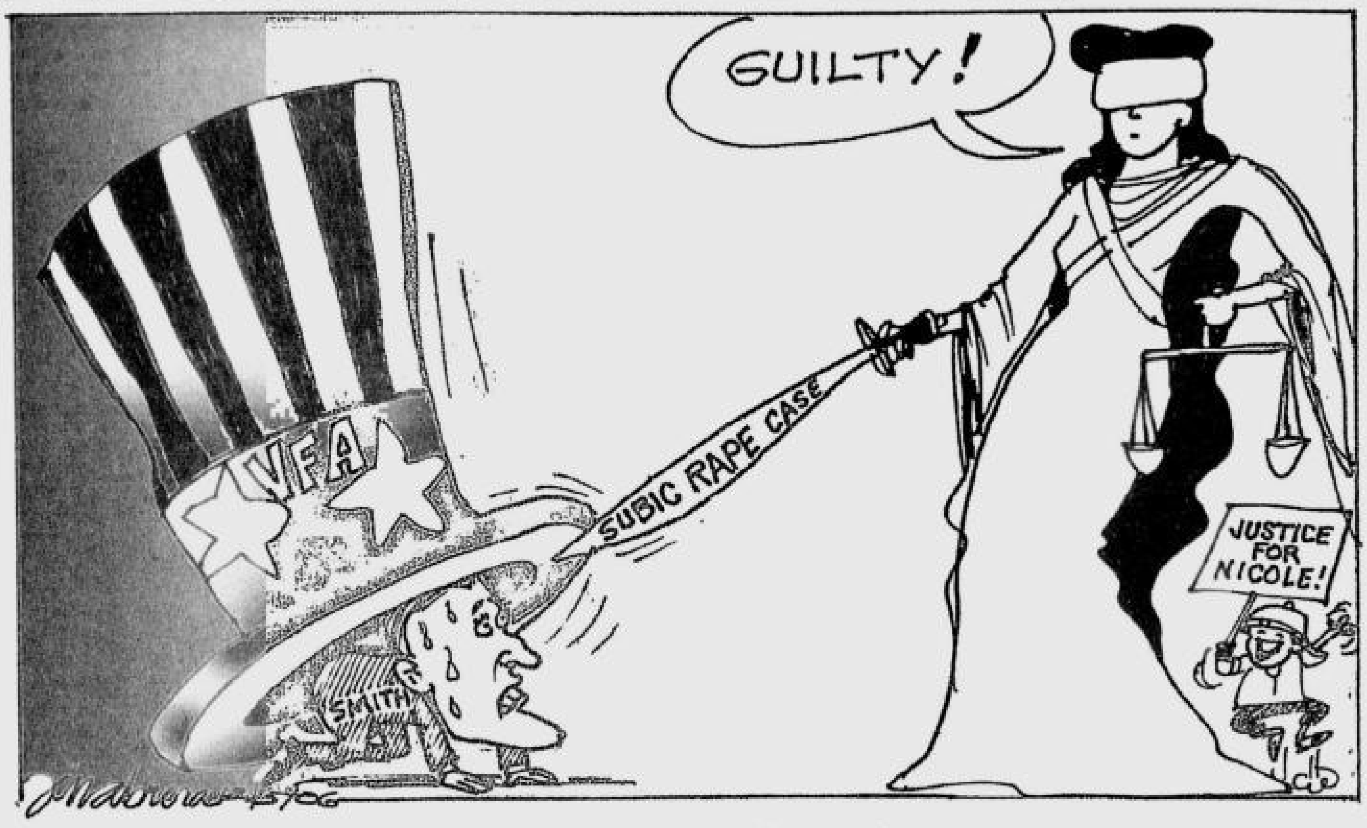

RSVP for a beheading

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

DID SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA EVER READ what Winston Churchill told the House of Commons in 1927? "A hopeful disposition is not the sole qualification to be a prophet," Churchill said.

A gushy nature oftentimes dumps "Sunshine Joe" into a fix. Thus, some papers report that he predicted that by December 15, a new Constitution and parliament would be in place. All De Venecia "prophesied" was that by Friday, 195 congressmen would approve a resolution on "congressional action for constitutional change."

That's the newest collar for an old mongrel. It's the House members announcing that they've anointed themselves to rewrite the Constitution in a constituent assembly. This con-ass spurns the suggestion by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, among others, that a constitutional convention instead revise the basic law. It also scrubs the Makati Business Club's call to make haste slowly by taking up Charter change after the May 2007 elections.

Legislators will scramble to anoint themselves to do the job. Given their superb track recording of feathering their nests, this con-ass will become, in editor H. L. Mencken's words, "a place where Jesus Christ and Judas would be equal. But the betting odds would be in favor of Judas."

The House will, thereafter, try to dismantle a co-equal Senate. "We're not abolishing the Senate," De Venecia insists. "We're merging it with the House."

Congressmen would, in fact, "invite" senators on Monday. For what? So they could "vote jointly" to decapitate the bicameral system. "They'll sentence the Senate in absentia," one joked. "They can execute it in absentia."

Does the Speaker have a list of who among the 23 senators will RSVP? After all, prophets can peer into the future. The faces would be fascinating.

And what is the quo for the quid of pliant senators agreeing to take ringside seats for the beheading? The May 2007 elections will be scrubbed. The terms of cashiered senators, as interim Parliament members, will be stretched. They will sit in unelected glory, alongside equally unelected congressmen, until November 2007. That's when the interim Parliament holds elections—maybe.

Politics has rewritten dictionaries before. "Interim" could turn out to be permanent. But now, bicameral means one chamber. And remember the coconut "levy"? A public tax meant a private fund, Marcos cronies said.

But stripping citizens of the vote scrubs accountability. It is also political TNT. Extended terms, however, tickle the guts of politicians and corrals support for a parliamentary system. Yet, De Venecia et al. assured us earlier that the "No-El" proposal submitted by the Constitutional Consultative Commission had been buried. Instead, "No-El," like the proverbial cat, has nine lives. "Would you buy a second-hand car from these guys?"

This is not voodoo constitutional tampering, as critics claim. But is it prophecy? Or is this merely hope of a would-be prime minister whose time is fast running out? In any case, the issue of two houses, in an existing bicameral system, voting jointly or separately will be tossed to a Supreme Court which, despite unseemly speculation on appointment of a chief justice, has proven strikingly independent.

Eight months ago, De Venecia "prophesied" that by July 30, a "people's initiative" or a bulldozed constituent assembly will have: (a) scrapped the 1987 Constitution; (b) and consigned the Senate into history's dustbin; (c) House members will have adopted an incomplete draft as a Constitution to be completed by an ill-defined Parliament; (d) and anointed themselves parliamentarians; (e) and a nationwide referendum, overseen by an incorrigible Elections Commission, will have been conducted.

Oracles, however, parcel the truth sparingly. De Venecia and pointman "Brat Pack" veteran Rep. Constantino Jaraula didn't tell us that the May 2007 polls would be scrubbed. The plan then was to make everybody's term of office coterminus with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's. How's that for mass bribery?

"The next 76 days will show whether this was a bogus prophecy," noted this column last May 16. "Will the end of July see a force-fed Constitution install, in a sham Parliament, unelected representatives who for the next three years would further impoverish a nation sedated by noontime soap operas"?

Well, July 30 came and left. And De Venecia's "prophecy" did not come to pass. Instead, the Supreme Court thrashed it by junking the people's initiative as a "grand deception." The proposal was constitutionally flawed, the high tribunal ruled. All a valid people's initiative can do is amend specific sections of the Constitution, not keel-haul it, as the administration's Sigaw ng Bayan insisted.

It was a "hare-brained scheme," Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz commented. He was drummed out of the Cabinet for that. In any case, the Court thereafter shredded "with finality" a motion to exhume what it interred.

But "seers" can't be bothered with such minor details. What's at stake, De Venecia insists, is an admittedly incomplete constitutional draft that would clamp on a murky parliamentary system. But it's guaranteed to usher us all into a "land of milk and honey."

The fact is, we blame a basically sound Constitution for every problem under the sun. But we sweep under the rug our own flaws, while politicians would embed further their greed and corruption. Is this why these "prophecies" bring to mind the old Waray proverb: "*Balang salug may buwaya.*" There's a crocodile in every river."

(E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com)

Impending bloodbath

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S TIME MAGAZINE'S TURN TO EXPRESS alarm over the killings. Or at least Andrew Marshall, a journalist based in Bangkok, its Nov. 27 issue essay writer, does.

Marshall begins by talking about his own experience. He personally knows people in the south who have been killed or are expecting to be killed. Ruby Sison, an activist friend of his, has it on good authority a contract has been made on her life. Her crime is continuing to keep the murders of journalists George and Maricel Vigo in the news. The Vigos were gunned down in broad daylight by men in motorcycles while on their way home to their five children. Thankfully, says Marshall, as he wrote his piece, Sison was still alive.

Well, if something should happen to her, it should damn this government to hell. For the threat to her life to be known to the world but death, like taxes, coming to her inevitably anyway—that should say everything there is to say about the depths to which this country has plunged.

Marshall goes on:

"But the slaughter of reporters, leftists, lawyers, labor leaders, priests, students and human-rights workers in the Philippines continues with a fury that recalls the darkest days of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship… In August, in response to international concern, Arroyo set up the six-member Melo Commission to probe the killings. Some bereaved families doubt its independence and have refused to testify. This distrust is symptomatic of a profound loss of faith in Arroyo herself. She is an unpopular president, plagued by corruption scandals and slammed for her failure to improve living standards. Arroyo has condemned the killings, but she will not implicate the military—even as it implicates itself. Col. Eduardo del Rosario, head of a military antiterrorist unit called Task Force Davao, admitted to Time earlier this year that 'individual commanders' might be responsible for the killings."

In fact, it's not just that that Arroyo is an unpopular president, plagued by corruption scandals. It is that she is an illegitimate president plagued by the "Hello Garci" tape. That is the wellspring of the killings. The only way a usurper can rule is by force, the only way a usurper can stop dissent is by stopping life. Remove GMA and you stop the killings. The infernal equation is simple, the divine resolve is not.

Indeed, that is the very bad news amid the good news. The fulminations are coming from outside, not from inside. The international community has risen to condemn the killings, the local one has not. Over the past few months, we've seen, or heard, variously: the citizens of the European countries GMA visited hound her with protests over the killings; the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce warn her that large-scale investments and wholesale murder do not mix; and now this from Time. Within this country, nothing. Or next to nothing. You do hear sporadic vituperations, notably from the kin of the dead, but that is all. It's as if we don't give a damn anymore and we've factored in wanton murder into our lot in life. And hope to extricate ourselves from everything by hopping on the next boat or plane, saying, "*Bahala na kayo sa buhay n'yo,* such as you still have a life, or are alive, I'm gone."

Hell, Willie Revillame found it so much easier to raise money for his legal defense against a wife who has accused him of abuse than we did to try to stop the killings with a musical outcry.

The silence carries a heavy price. Quite apart from the obvious one of more journalists and political activists being killed in future, there is the possibility of the killings spilling over into the elections next year. That was pointed out to me by my friend Dan de Padua, who's in charge of ABC5's News and Public Affairs. It's true. The only thing that can really stop killings of this scale is public outrage, and that not being there, what's to prevent mayhem in the next elections from becoming mind-boggling?

As I write this, I've just seen our item (Nov. 30, p. 9) about the gunsmiths of Davao flourishing with candidates patronizing their wares in anticipation of next year's elections. While this is a usual occurrence before elections, the prospect of *paltiks* spreading all over this country over the next few months faster than fake ballots has become far more sanguine (literally). The people who are directly in the line of fire here (again literally) are the party-list candidates. If ABC5's documentary last Sept. 21 on Jovito Palparan's doings is anything to go by, soldiers are being taught to see no distinction between Bayan Muna and other parties—indeed to see all of them as the Enemy.

Quite apart from that, the other people who are likely to be in the line of fire here are the opposition candidates. Next year's elections have all the makings of the 1971 elections and/or the recent US senatorial elections: The administration is headed for a debacle or epic proportions. It's an election that is likely to have only one issue, who is GMA, in the same way that the 1971 elections had only one issue, who was Marcos, and in the same way that the recent US elections had only one issue, who was George W. Bush. The last two elections resulted in a massacre of administration candidates. Not so this May if the administration candidates, national and/or local, can massacre their rivals first—completely non-figuratively. I said in previous columns that the opposition bets, to a man or woman, are likely to be proclaimed winners in next year's elections, provided the votes are counted right. I have to qualify that with something more elemental: The opposition bets are likely to be proclaimed winners in next year's elections, provided they are still alive.

There is the devil to pay for the silence.

Even Vietnam has overtaken RP

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

INTEL, THE WORLD'S TOP MANUFACTURER OF semi-conductors, announced on the eve of the Hanoi APEC Summit that it's expanding its original plan to set up a plant in Vietnam from $300 million to $1 billion. This news is yet another affirmation that foreign investors are now trooping to our once war-torn neighbor, whose growth rate is about 7-8 percent annually. What's attracting investors is Vietnam's political stability and speed in implementing policies and reforms. By contrast, the Philippines is perceived as too slow.

Take the privatization of Napocor. How many years has it been in the pipeline, with little progress? The culprit has been the cumbersome (not to mention, expensive) two-chamber set-up in Congress where bills take years to enact owing to gridlock and too much politics. There's also the perception of political instability, owing to repeated coup attempts and rumors.

* * *

Now our country is on the final push toward Charter change, with the House of Representatives as its revved-up engine. There's fierce resistance from vested interests, e.g., politicians with presidential ambitions or those out to preserve the status quo. There's also the normal fear of change among the people. Anti-change forces have been unfairly demonizing House leaders such as Speaker Jose de Venecia as well as a very worthy Supreme Court member, Associate Justice Reynato Puno, who they expect to vote for con-ass when this issue comes before the Court.

But we should realize that the political system we've had for 60 years hasn't worked for us, and retaining it would render us not only badly fragmented but also lagging behind in the fierce competition for investments in our region. The alternative to change is stagnation, and in our day and age, this is the same as to perish.

* * *

Media and select guests were treated to a "sneak preview" of the fashion show in the cultural program for the Asean and East Asia Summit gala dinner at the Mactan Shangri-La Hotel on Dec. 12. The 17 gowns were creations of Asia's fashion czar Pitoy Moreno, who was requested by President Macapagal-Arroyo to creatively blend Philippine raw materials, such as *pina* and *sinamay*, and designs inspired by the culture of the 10 Asean countries and their seven dialogue partners. Beauty title holders will model the gowns, highlighting the timeless beauty of the Pinay. Pitoy outdid himself in this new collection, but few know that he retrieved most of the fabric materials from his *baul*. Some fabrics had originally been intended for a PAL fashion show that didn't materialize 20 years. ago. Luckily, Pitoy kept them, otherwise his *burdadoras* couldn't have finished in time for the Asean. Besides, no one does such *kalado* art nowadays.

* * *

GMA took advantage of the occasion to appeal to her guests for help for the suffering people of Bicolandia even as she exhorted the latter to "remain strong in coping with and overcoming this tragedy." She promised all the help of government to get the region back on its feet at the "soonest possible time." Earlier, as Cecile Alvarez and I looked at the gowns at Pitoy's atelier for our radio show, I realized that government and the private sector could help the Bicolanos by spurring activities that would not be affected by the natural disasters that regularly visit the region. One way is to push production of *sinamay*. Another is to train Bicolanas in the fine art of embroidery which, as Pitoy admits, has all but disappeared.

* * *

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda suggests that GMA create a Mayon Commission to study and plan ways of arresting the further devastation of towns and cities around the volcano due to lahar and mudflows. Deadly mudflows buried some towns in Albay, and Salceda fears the disaster could be repeated for a long time, just like what happened to various towns in Pampanga after the 1991 Pinatubo eruption.

His suggestion is sound. Coping with a Pinatubo-like devastation in Albay every rainy season would require organized disaster control and coordination and substantial funds. Salceda himself would be in the best position to head this commission since he's serving his last term. And if our worst fear of show biz personalities invading the Senate in 2007 comes true, there'll be no room for a brilliant economist there.

* * *

The recent Billiards and Snooker Congress at the PICC saw the participation of three Filipino former billiard champs: Efren "Bata" Reyes (whom Time Magazine Asia recently honored as one of the 60 Asians who shaped events in our region in the last 60 years), Alex Pagulayan and Francisco Bustamante. Yen Makabenta of Prism Communications, who chaired the congress, and Neny Regino, its media director, proudly noted that the 42 participating countries were quite happy about how the congress went and they want it held here again next year. Regino pointed out that both participants and spectators liked the food catered by Barbara's. The foreigners also found the accommodations at the Philippine Plaza "impeccable."

* * *

The billiards congress, covered by worldwide TV, could develop into a regular international tourism event for RP. It also showed how we Pinoys can manage something well if we set our minds to it. Moreover, it revealed a vast reservoir of Pinoy talents, e.g., Pinay referee Ces Marquez and 16-year-old Rene Mar David, who participated recently in the global junior championship in Sydney. Other countries concede mastery of the billiards game to the Filipinos and the natural query is why. Makabenta said that's because billiards is not an expensive sport, and all our champs prove that. The downside, however, is that this often means dropping out of school. There's also the gambling aspect that appeals to Pinoys.

Not yet over

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

TO HEAR IT FROM THE LAWYERS OF CPL. Daniel Smith, "Nicole's" year-long ordeal is far from over.

It is their contention that "judicial proceedings" on the Subic rape case are not yet over, and that in fact, despite the conviction of Smith for rape, the fight continues.

The main issue right now, judging from the interviews conducted during the live coverage of the promulgation yesterday, is where Smith should be detained. Judge Benjamin Pozon of the Makati Regional Trial Court ordered that pending an agreement between American and Filipino authorities on where Smith should serve his sentence of *reclusion perpetua*, he would be held at the Makati City Jail. Smith's lawyer contested the decision, but the judge turned him down flat.

There then ensued a tussle, described by TV reporters as a struggle for custody of Smith. The Makati police were reportedly hustling off the US Marine to the Makati jail while American security men tried to regain custody of Smith.

Interviews with Smith's lawyer and other members of the defense panel revealed that they believed that since "judicial proceedings" had yet to be resolved (being resolved only when the Supreme Court rules with finality on the case, which we know in this country can take years, even decades), the "status quo," that is, custody by the US Embassy, should prevail. They were supported in this contention by Zosimo Paredes, the controversial head of the DFA VFA Task Force, who at first tried to be impartial in his interpretation but later weighed in with what he called his personal opinion.

Still, I'm glad the Makati police prevailed (at least, as far as the coverage footage showed), with Smith being stuffed into a patrol car with an entire posse of cops, so many of them that they couldn't even close the car door.

* * *

I'M GLAD because it sent a strong statement about Philippine sovereignty. If, despite the guilty verdict, Smith was still able to run to the caring hands of his American handlers, then it would have made a mockery of Philippine law and the judicial system.

Smith's lawyers may, for all we know, be right in their interpretation of the VFA provisions, but it's worth fighting for a contrary interpretation and keeping Smith in Philippine custody. I just wish Paredes had kept his trap shut, because while he may have had his personal opinion, the proper position should be that Philippine sovereignty reigns supreme and it is up to the US government to argue why it should gain custody of Smith. Smith was found guilty under Philippine law, and he should serve out his sentence as provided for under our laws.

Lawyer Zenaida Reyes, who sat as a resource person during the ANC coverage, also made quite a telling point regarding the three acquitted servicemen. As far as Philippine law was concerned, there may be no more appealing the decision, but the men still face disciplinary action from the American military organization. That is, if the establishment holds true to its proclaimed policy of "zero tolerance" for sex solicitation among its personnel overseas.

* * *

I WINCED a bit when I heard the clerk of court read out Nicole's real name, broadcast to all the world on live TV. Someone had told me her real name some months ago, but I had completely forgotten it, since it wasn't that important to me, and I had come to think of her only as "Nicole."

Korina Sanchez, who anchored the ANC coverage, made much of the revelation of Nicole's real name and the need for media to continue to protect her identity, since court records, which are of public record and therefore accessible to anyone who wants to see them, already reveal who she is.

But Nicole's upset reaction when Sanchez told her that part of her face was captured by cameras as she was leaving the courtroom told us how she felt about the issue. It's obviously important to Nicole that her privacy be preserved, that she be able to rebuild her life after the tumultuous, painful events of the past year have blown over.

Rachel Khan, chair of the UP journalism department, pointed out that there was never any law prohibiting the media from disclosing Nicole's identity. But there is a Code of Ethics that journalists should abide by, which bars the disclosure of a rape survivor's identity to protect her from the stigma attached to rape and to enable her to begin anew.

Again, what is so urgent about the public's "right to know" Nicole's identity, including what she looks like? Why should we ignore her personal wishes when the coverage of the case has proceeded smoothly enough even if we knew her merely as Nicole, and won't recognize her even if we should bump into her in the grocery? As it is, we already know too much about Nicole, including the gory details of what happened on the night of Nov. 1, 2005. Do we need to know even more about her?

* * *

INDEED, if there is an object lesson here, it's that the humiliation and psychic torture of a rape survivor continue long after the rape itself.

Aside from having to relive the abuse when giving testimony to police, lawyers and the court, the complainant must sit through months of hearings in which her sexual history and behavior, her personality, even her morality are examined in detail and brought into question. Then, during the promulgation, she must listen while the details of her ordeal, including findings on the contusions and injuries to her private parts, are read aloud for the world to hear, and set down in writing as part of the permanent judicial record.

And then, even after a guilty verdict is handed down, as in Nicole's case, she will be hounded by attempts to strip her of the protection provided by anonymity, the last shred of comfort she relied on through all these months of hardship.

What now in the Middle East?

WORLD VIEW

Joschka Fischer

THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATION IN the vast region between the Indus Valley and the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean is a cause for grave concern. When the United States intervened militarily in Iraq in 1991, the intention was to effect fundamental change in the entire region. Today it is clear that hardly any aspect of this policy has succeeded. Even the success of free elections in Iraq is threatening to divide rather than unite the country.

The existing power relations in the Middle East have been permanently shaken and, indeed, revolutionized. The effect however, has not been a domino-like democratization; instead we are threatened with a domino effect of descent into chaos.

The decision to go to war against Iraq to liberate Kuwait, back in 1991, marked the beginning of America's role as the sole hegemonic military power in the region. The decision to go to war against Iraq for a second time, and then to occupy the country in March 2003, transformed this hegemony into direct US responsibility for the future of the Middle East.

Two outcomes could flow from America's adopted role as the decisive power in the Middle East. Were the US to succeed in using its military strength, it would create a new, democratic Middle East. But were it, despite its military might, to fail, it would create a power vacuum and destabilize the region. The second scenario—which was foreseeable from the outset—has now become a reality.

The very character of the war in Iraq has been transformed from a democratizing mission into a stabilizing mission high in casualties and in cost. Instead of the intended radical realignment of power relations in the region, the aim is now to simply maintain the status quo.

The most the US can hope at this point is a withdrawal that saves face. The recent elections in America were a referendum on the war in Iraq. Their result in fact set a timetable for the "Iraqisation" and US withdrawal—before the next presidential election.

Behind the all-too-foreseeable end of the American stabilizing mission lurks a civil war in Iraq, which threatens to turn into an Arab-Iranian proxy war for dominance in Iraq, the Gulf, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, and beyond. Moreover, there is an acute risk that the power vacuum created in Iraq will fuse the Israeli-Arab conflict, Iraq, and Afghanistan into one regional mega-crisis.

In light of America's impending withdrawal, the regional powers are reassessing their interests and objectives. Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, Turkey, and Israel will be the main players. With the Iraq war, the US has lost its unilateral-power position in the Middle East, and elsewhere. In the future, various global powers will be active in the Middle East—primarily the US, Russia, China, India. Let's hope Europe is among them, because its security is defined there.

So at stake is no longer just Iraq, but rather the future of the entire region. We can count ourselves lucky if the emerging chaos can be contained in Iraq.

Washington's realization that Iraq can no longer be won or even stabilized unless the regional framework changes, has come late—perhaps too late. The US will have to find agreement with its allies and enter into direct talks with all the other players to try and achieve a new regional consensus.

If this policy shift had taken place a year ago or even early last summer, the prospects would have been better. And with every passing day, America's position in the region is weakening further and the chances of a successful new political strategy become more remote.

The greatest danger stems from Iran, the clear beneficiary of the Iraqi power vacuum. Iran harbors hegemonic ambitions which it seeks to realize by means of its military potential, oil and gas reserves, its nuclear program, its influence over Shiites throughout the region, and its efforts to upset the status quo within the Arab Muslim world.

Yet Iran is also relatively isolated. Its only allies in the region are Syria and Hezbollah. What's more, it is threatened by a de-facto anti-Iranian coalition of all other regional powers, united by their fear of Iranian ascendancy.

If the West—America and Europe—act swiftly, decisively, and with a joint strategy, there remains a chance to stabilize the situation. But to achieve this, it will be necessary to offset, or at least balance, the interests of the most important actors in the region. This means a strategy based on political leverage not a threat of military intervention or regime change. In their stead must come, on the one hand, direct talks, security guarantees, and support in political and economic integration. To be successful, this strategy also requires a realistic threat of isolation of those who continue to undermine regional stability, as well as substantial progress in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

A new Middle East policy will thus have to concentrate primarily on four aspects: 1) a comprehensive offer to Syria to detach the country from Iran and settle open conflicts; 2) an offer to Iran for direct talks about the perspective of a full normalization of relations; 3) a decisive and realistic initiative to resolve the Israeli-Arab conflict; 4) a regional security architecture that centers on stabilizing Iraq and Afghanistan. ***Project Syndicate***

Joschka Fischer was Germany's foreign minister and vice chancellor from 1998 to 2005. A leader in the Green Party for nearly 20 years, he is now a visiting professor at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School.

Waiting

"Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits."
—*Thomas Alva Edison*

YOUNG BLOOD

Elvie Victonette B. Razon, M.D.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

PEOPLE SAY THAT IF THERE'S ANYTHING WORSE THAN getting bad news, it's being in the state of not knowing. It's being left in the dark, being unsure of what will happen next, not knowing the answers to questions that are sure to come in a few seconds if you're lucky or in 100 years if you still care. It happens when you have done everything that you could, you gave it your best shot and (sigh) there's nothing left to do but wait.

You have gone through the motions before. You know it when you resign yourself to the fact that waiting is not an option but your only choice. There is futility in it, a sense of impending doom we are all familiar with. It is the agony of waiting outside the operating room, waiting until a surgeon goes out with a look in his eyes that speaks of triumph or defeat, which translates into life or death for the patient. You always hope for the best, that everything will turn out all right and that you can all go home after the operation, but everybody knows that in surgery, something, anything can always go wrong. It is the torture of waiting for the results of the board exam. You know you worked and prayed your hardest, but sometimes even the brightest stars dim and we just wonder why.

Waiting in line in almost any situation is a character-altering, self-reducing (if such a term exists) experience. I don't exaggerate, but waiting in line at a moviehouse, a grocery, an elevator or a fast-food chain outlet, certainly is not my favorite way of spending time. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that "in all energy exchanges, if no energy enters or leaves the system, the potential energy of the state will always be less than that of the initial state." If we are to follow this line of thought, we become lesser men and women because something is always lost in that quantum of time that we are doing nothing. We even feel as if we cease to live, instead of seizing the day.

But man is by nature an adaptive animal, and he will do anything to survive. He would try to forget his predicaments and banish all his strong urges to whine, so he does everything that will take his thoughts in the opposite direction. It is a form of escapism, but it is far from being counterproductive. It's going back to the basics, the basic law governing nature, which is the survival of the fittest. It's about keeping your head above the water.

There's nothing more terrifying than waiting for results that could make or break you. And right now, I am in a situation where I am reduced to doing nothing but wait. I am waiting for a call from a hospital where I hope to get my residency. I tried to do my best during the interview and during the pre-residency (in simple terms, medical apprenticeship) and right now, I know the training committee is deliberating and choosing who among a hundred or more applicants they will accept for residency. And that is why I am hustling while I'm waiting. There's nothing left for me to do because I have already done what I could when I should .

I make the most of my time watching all episodes of two of my current favorite TV shows, "Grey's Anatomy" and "House, M.D." I have begun reading novels/books that have been lying around for too long, books I have never gotten around to reading, such as the sardonic "The Great Gatsby" (I have never really understood the festivity of the Jazz Age; I find it a tad too depressing), or the insightful "The Godfather." (Now I know why the male of the species is crazy about it. I never expected to enjoy all the gore, the ruthlessness, the manipulations but I enjoyed it. It's pure genius.)

I have organized my closet, rearranged the furniture in my room, ironed my clothes and arranged my books alphabetically. Next on my list of things to do is arrange my photo albums and iron the clothes of other members of our family. Which just goes to show that I am prepared to do just about anything that would keep me preoccupied.

If there's anything good that has, or will come out of this (I am hopeful!), I know that it's learning the art of surrendering and letting go. And that includes learning to trust that everything will turn out right, no matter what. I believe that "behind every cloud is a silver lining." And I know that without my knowing it, my silver lining is not the positive results I am hoping for but what I have now as a result of all this waiting: hope and faith.

Elvie Victonette B. Razon, M.D., 26, passed the medical board exams last August 2006. She has been accepted for residency training at the Philippine General Hospital-Department of Medicine.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Harrowing experience

"Rape as a harrowing experience is not remembered in detail. It casts a stigma upon the victim. Rape is a grave physical violation and it subjects the woman's honor to scorn… The court is morally convinced that Smith is guilty of having committed the crime [as] charged."

—Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon, in his decision convicting Lance Corporal Daniel Smith of raping "Nicole"

Brotherly concern

"We're creating noise now because the tuition increase will affect many people, including our younger brothers and sisters. Just because we won't be affected doesn't mean we should no longer intervene. We're from UP. That's what separates us from other universities."

—UP Diliman University Student Council chair Juan Paolo Alfonso on the proposed 300-percent hike in UP tuition fees

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A policy of contradictions and amusing presumptions

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S RECENT Executive Order outlining the National Policy on Biological Diversity—signed Nov. 8 in Isla Verde, Batangas—is not without its contradictions and amusing presumptions.

Her professed "support" for terrestrial and marine biodiversity is contradicted by the reality that many of her pet economic policies pose threats to the stability of our natural ecosystems. For instance, the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) is an environmental and economic menace because it provides a policy loophole for the export of toxic and hazardous wastes into the Philippines, aggravating our country's looming waste and pollution problem and further endangering the people's health. Its easing of trade restrictions for foreign-owned commercial fishing trawlers will also intensify the over-extraction of fish and marine resources from our ecosystems.

The government's inability to curb legal—and illegal—commercial logging also contributes to large-scale biodiversity loss. Rapid denudation of our existing forest covers due to logging has been an exacerbating factor in environmental tragedies such as the 2003 Southern Leyte landslide and the 2004 Aurora-Quezon flashflood. But since January 2001 through June 2004, the Arroyo administration has granted 23 new Integrated Forest Management Agreements (IFMAs), which allow logging in nearly 200,000 hectares of forest areas.

Biodiversity is also threatened by the mining operations of foreign transnational companies (TNCs), which is blatantly encouraged under the Mining Act of 1995 and GMA's mining revitalization policy. The government has approved mining operations despite clamors for large-scale mining moratoriums in areas classified as environmentally critical (such as Rapu-Rapu island in Albay).

GMA said that we can only be "tops in biodiversity if we alleviate the poverty that forces people to exploit them mindlessly." This conveniently omits the fact that the primary exploiters of our biodiversity are the TNCs which, by their sheer size and extractive capacity, have contributed the most to environmental devastation in the Philippines. Unfortunately, the Arroyo administration has chosen to coddle exploitative foreign TNCs instead of subjecting them to accountability and prosecution for their abuses.

—LISA ITO, public information officer and CLEMENTE BAUTISTA, national coordinator, Kalikasan-Peoples' Network for the Environment Kalikasan-PNE

Pacquiao should beware of crocodiles

I FULLY AGREE WITH THE PUBLIC calls asking Manny Pacquiao not to enter politics as it will only ruin his image! Predictably, greedy politicians will lure him into that "dirty game" of theirs.

Pacquiao can help his fellow Filipinos even if he does not go into politics. For example, he can organize a foundation for retired and old boxers, or support professional boxing by helping set up and upgrade the facilities of old gyms by providing some boxing gloves, punching bags and other items needed for this sport.

Pacquiao should not even think of joining politics. If he did, he would only be making a mess out of his life. Those urging him to run for a public office are only going to use him and exploit his fame for their own ends.

Beware of crocodiles, Manny!

—JUN AREVALO,
Baloy01@adelphia.net

MANNY Pacquiao, with a son of Mayor Lito Atienza, waves from a vehicle during a ticker-tape parade in his honor.

Is Manila mayor a real friend of Manny Pacquiao?

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT MAYOR LITO Atienza is desperately doing everything to get Manny Pacquiao as his son Ali's running mate. I can't blame him, knowing Ali's possible political rivals. The mayor's insistence, though, could cost Manny's career. It seems to me that the elder Atienza is just using Manny for his personal, political agenda—as President Macapagal-Arroyo did with Vice President Noli de Castro.

I pity Manny; he should not be given this dilemma. If Atienza is really Manny's friend, he should not lead Manny to a disaster. He should abandon all efforts to get Manny to run for public office.

—ALDEN JEROME MAMARIL,
ajcmamaril@tinig.com

Social responsibility of sports heroes

THIS IS IN REACTION TO CONrado de Quiros' Nov. 21 column "Proud to be Filipino." Is a victory in sports all it takes to be proud of being Filipino? I think we can do better than that! I'm not proud of someone who is not even aware how corrupt our leaders are.

Sportsmen, like artists, have a social responsibility to be aware of what is happening in our country.

Also, I don't think boxing is a sport.

—LUCITA LUCIANI,
lucitaluciani@yahoo.com

Naming sports center after Pacman illegal

REGARDING THE PLAN OF THE CITY OF Manila to rename the San Andres Sports Complex and Civic Center in Malate to Manny Pacquiao Sports Center (PDI, 11/22/06), I think that it is not possible because there is a law that prohibits renaming places (streets, buildings, bridges, etc.) in honor of living persons.

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court, Malanday, Marikina City

Chief Justice didn't dissuade Santiago from JBC interview

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS ITEM, "MIRIAM waives SC 'job interview,' by Armand N. Nocum and Juliet Labog-Javellana. (PDI, 11/30/06)

Obviously, the report was based on an unreliable source with a fertile imagination. Its "spin" thus resulted in an untruthful account that is at once unfair to Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban, former Senate President Jovito Salonga, and even to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago. The Chief Justice most certainly did not ask Senator Santiago to waive the JBC interview "after the five justices declined to submit to it." Beyond the usual pleasantries upon meeting, the two of them did not engage in any further conversation regarding the matter. I also called up Senator Salonga who expressed surprise and disgust at how the so-called "source" came to the farfetched conclusion that he regarded the aborted JBC interview of Senator Santiago as an opportunity for revenge against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The fact of the matter is that the panel interview contemplated by the JBC is only optional for sitting justices. This follows the unbroken traditional practice under the 1987 Constitution, as well as American precedent. The five justices who have exercised their option, having previously gone through the interview process before they were appointed to the Supreme Court, believe that the JBC should scrutinize their opinions. The opinions—whether the majority decision, concurring or dissenting—will more than demonstrate the actual independence, integrity and competence of the justices.

—ISMAEL G. KHAN JR., assistant court administrator and chief, Public Information Office, Supreme Court of the Philippines

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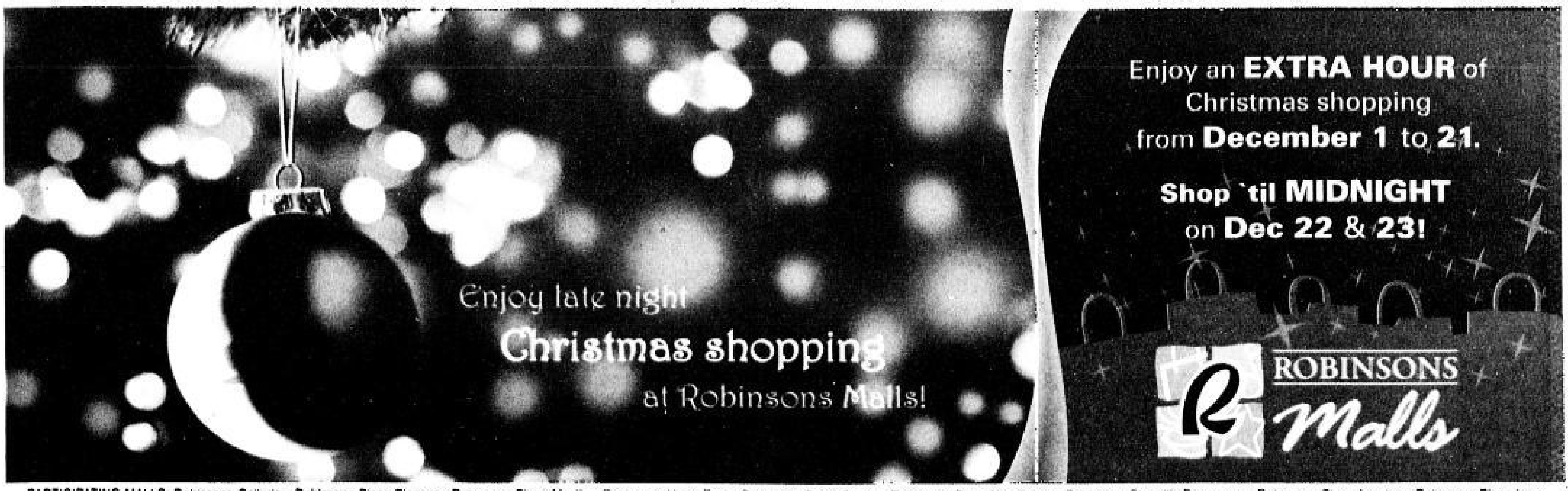

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Senate OKs P1-trillion budget, with huge cuts

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE LAST NIGHT APPROVED on third and final reading the P1.126-trillion national budget for 2007 but not after slashing huge cuts in the allocations for the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), the Supreme Court and the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFACom) and realigning these.

Voting 16-0, the senators passed the budget measure as submitted by President Macapagal-Arroyo to Congress, with a few amendments.

The Senate's version was lower by P8.4 billion (in programmed funds) than the budget approved by the House of the Representatives last month. Because of this, the senators expect a tough bicameral conference committee fight with congressmen later this week.

"The Senate approved the President's budget as submitted... We brought back the budget to the point where the President submitted it," Sen. Franklin Drilon, finance committee chair, told reporters.

The budget consisted of programmed and unprogrammed appropriations, and automatic appropriations for debt service.

The Senate's programmed appropriations stood at P573.912 billion, some P8.4 billion less than the programmed appropriations in the House version.

Opposition Senators Panfilo Lacson and Alfredo Lim manifested on the floor that they were waiving their Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF), or pork barrel, for next year. Each senator is entitled to a P200-million pork barrel.

The Senate budget version incorporated the senators' amendments that radically reduced the PCGG budget from P79.190 million to P1, the Supreme Court's from P8.157 billion to P6.705 billion, and the VFACom's from P2.184 million to P100.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who had tangled with PCGG officials over the mismanagement of the sequestered Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. of which he is a founding shareholder, had moved for the huge cut in the agency's budget.

He had proposed that the rest of the agency's allocation be transferred to the Bureau of Customs.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, furious over her exclusion from the short list of nominees for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court which she blamed on retiring Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, made a last-minute manifestation on the floor to reduce the SC's budget to its 2005 level. *(See related story on Page A2.)*

Santiago had earlier written the finance committee asking that the budget of the VFACom be reduced to P100 since the office duplicated the functions of the Legislative Office on the VFA, which she cochairs with a member of the House of Representatives.

The cuts were realigned to other items in the budget.

The Senate version's unprogrammed appropriations stood at P46.409 billion, lower than that of the House by P20.598 billion.

"We examined these, and with the concurrence of the budget secretary, we deleted some portions, which can't be funded to reduce the discretion of the executive branch," Drilon said.

The Senate also deleted a P5.9-billion item in the unprogrammed appropriations that the government had intended to use to pay the Chinese contractor of the controversial NorthRail train project that would run between Caloocan City and Bulacan.

Doctors back pay hike for health workers

THE PHILIPPINE MEDICAL Association has called for a full implementation of the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers, the 14-year-old law which provides for the salary increase of health professionals, among other benefits.

The appeal, contained in a statement sent to the INQUIRER, was directed to local government units, which had been enjoined by the Departments of Interior and Local Government and Budget and Management to set aside funds from their internal revenue allotment.

"The LGUs still need to fully implement the provisions of the law and the health workers are placed in a situation where they need to beg for what is legally due them," the PMA said.

The health sector has been banking on the magna carta to ensure the salary increase of health workers like doctors and nurses, a primary strategy to dissuade them from leaving for higher-paying jobs abroad.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said that last year some 6,000 doctors enrolled in nursing schools, so they could work abroad as nurses. *Christian V. Esguerra*

12 senior officers get new positions in PNP reshuffle

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police (PNP) has given 12 senior officers new positions, in acting capacity, as part of the ongoing reshuffle in the police leadership.

PNP Chief Dir. Gen. Oscar Calderon said in a statement that the reshuffle anticipates the retirement of some senior officials in the coming months.

He added that the new appointments were finalized by the Senior Officers Placement and Promotion Board chaired by Dep. Dir. Gen. Avelino Razon, the PNP's Deputy Chief for Administration.

Calderon said the SOPPB based the new appointments on the comprehensive review and evaluation of merit, seniority and competence of all nominees to the different posts.

Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino is set to sit as Acting Director for Plans, replacing Dir. Rodolfo Tor.

Chief Supt. Andres Caro will take the post of Acting Regional Director of Region 11, replacing Chief Supt. Ricardo Quinto. Tor and Quinto have been reassigned to the Office of the PNP Chief pending their forthcoming retirement.

Chief Supt. Teodorico Capuyan is Acting Regional Commander of Region 10 after Chief Supt. Florante Baguio who retired last month.

Chief Supt. Ricardo Padilla is set to replace Chief Supt. Victor Boco as police commander of Region 5 who is retiring on Jan. 11, 2007. However, Calderon said he has instructed Boco to complete the relief and rehabilitation efforts in the Bicol region which was hit by Typhoon Reming recently before relinquishing his post.

The other officers with new positions are: Chief Supt. Pedro Tango is the Acting District Director of the Northern Police District; Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales is Acting District Director of Southern Police District; Sr. Supt. Fidel Cimatu is Acting Deputy Director for Plans; Sr. Supt. Orlando Mabutas is Acting Executive Director of the Directorate for Human Resource and Doctrine Development; Sr. Supt. Rolando Anonuevo is Acting Deputy Director Intelligence Group and Acting Task Force Commander of Task Force Sanglahi; Sr. Supt. Edwin Corvera is Deputy Task Force Commander of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force; Sr. Supt. Atilano Morada is Acting Director of the Aviation Security Group.

Besides Baguio, other senior officers who retired last month are Chief Supt. Leonardo Dionisio of the Civil Security Group and Chief Supt. Nestor Sanares of the Philippine Center on Transnational Crime (PCTFC).

Meanwhile, Calderon said the PNP has completed the release of P957 million as cash bonuses for its 119,000 uniformed and non-uniformed personnel.

In his report to Calderon, PNP Director for Comptrollership Noe Wong said the amount is part of the 13th Month pay to personnel. The bonuses will be given in the form of individual checks.

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Troop voter list-up puzzles Comelec

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—A MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS officer in Leyte expressed surprise over what he called a "high degree of interest" among soldiers to register as voters for next year's elections.

Rutchie Cerro, elections officer of Burauen town in Leyte, said members of the 801st Infantry Brigade had been trooping to the Comelec office in the last two weeks to register as voters there.

"I am really amazed at this sudden high degree of interest among our soldiers based here to register as voters. They came in groups," Cerro said in a telephone interview.

According to Cerro, about 200 members of the brigade have filed their application at the Comelec office in Burauen, a third-class town 42 km from Tacloban City.

The 801st IB is based in Barangay Abuyugon, 5 km from the town proper of Burauen.

"But I think the public has nothing to worry. Their application is not yet accepted. They just filed their application to vote," he said.

The soldiers' move to register in their areas of assignment also generated criticism from the militant group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya).

Gerry Albert Corpuz, Pamalakaya national spokesperson, said that Malacañang is behind this move to ensure the victory of its candidates.

Corpuz viewed the soldiers' ongoing registration with the Comelec as part of the preparation for the plebiscite on the proposed amendment of the Constitution.

If Charter change pushed through, he also alleged that the soldiers "will perform electoral fraud and terrorize opposition candidates, including Bayan Muna and Anakpawis, if the May 2007 polls push through as scheduled."

Corpuz urged officials of the Comelec in the region to nullify the registration of these soldiers and to conduct an inquiry.

"We will not buy the statement of the military that they would remain neutral and there's nothing wrong or sinister in having his boys registered in Eastern Visayas. As far as we are concerned, government troops will serve as future flying voters," Corpuz said.

But Cerro said the registration by these soldiers could still be nullified once the three-member Election Register Board, which he chairs, starts exclusion proceedings.

He said that any individual could contest the application of these soldiers during the exclusion proceedings, which would start early January of next year.

"The act of filing the application does not mean approval of their application. It is just an indication on their part they would like to vote here in Burauen," Cerro said.

Col. Allan Agpala, commanding officer of the 801st IB, defended the move, saying the soldiers just want to exercise their voting rights.

Military says rebel strength down in Central Luzon

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—The number of rebels in Central Luzon and Pangasinan is dwindling due to the attacks launched by the military against them and the cooperation of the community, an Army official said here on Monday.

"We already saw signs. They are making efforts to consolidate their small groups to show to the public that they still have the number and the strength to carry on their fight," Maj. Gen. Juanito Gomez, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, said.

"Nobody wins in a defensive stance. So I urged my officers and men to carry out a continuing offensive against the enemy," he said.

Gomez cited the recent clash of his men with 70 New People's Army rebels in the mountain area in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija.

He said based on intelligence reports the rebels came from different areas purportedly to hold a plenum to map out their moves in view of the Army's offensives.

The rebels in Central Luzon and part of Pangasinan are losing their mass base and that they are no longer able to recruit new members "because they cannot move freely now," he said.

He said the cooperation of civilians in giving information about the enemy's activities is helping in the fight against the NPA.

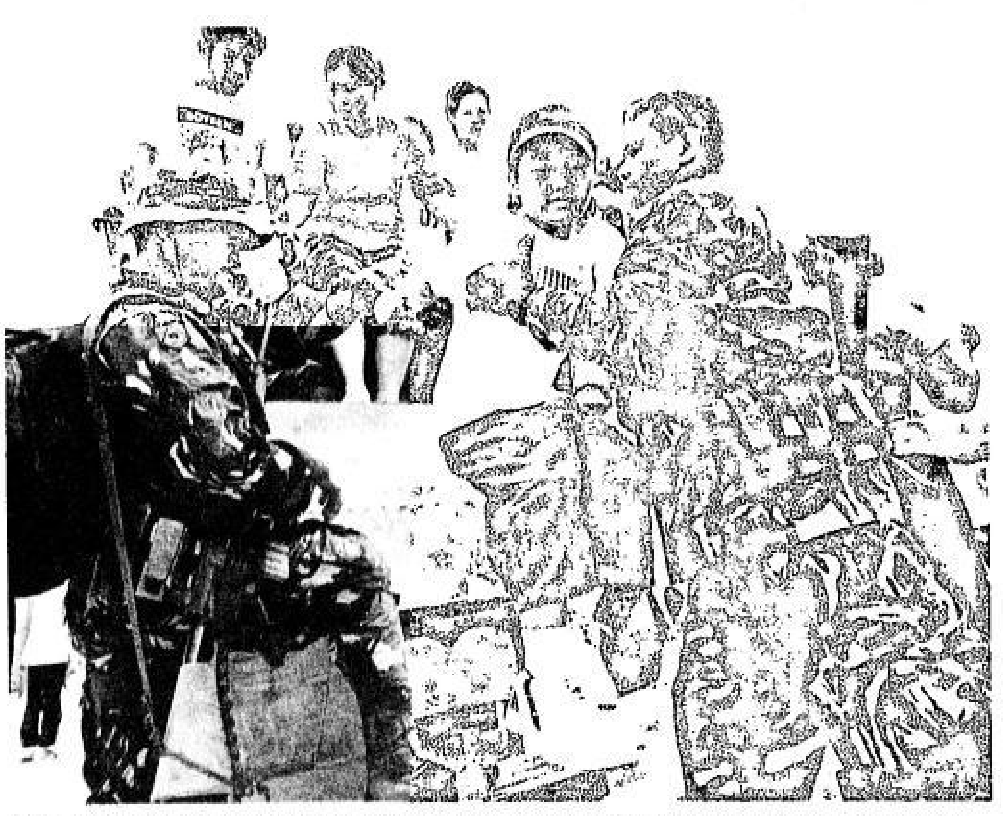
According to him, Army soldiers had 12 clashes with the rebels in Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga and northern Nueva Ecija in the last two months.

At least 10 rebels were killed and more than 30 firearms were recovered from those encounters, he said.

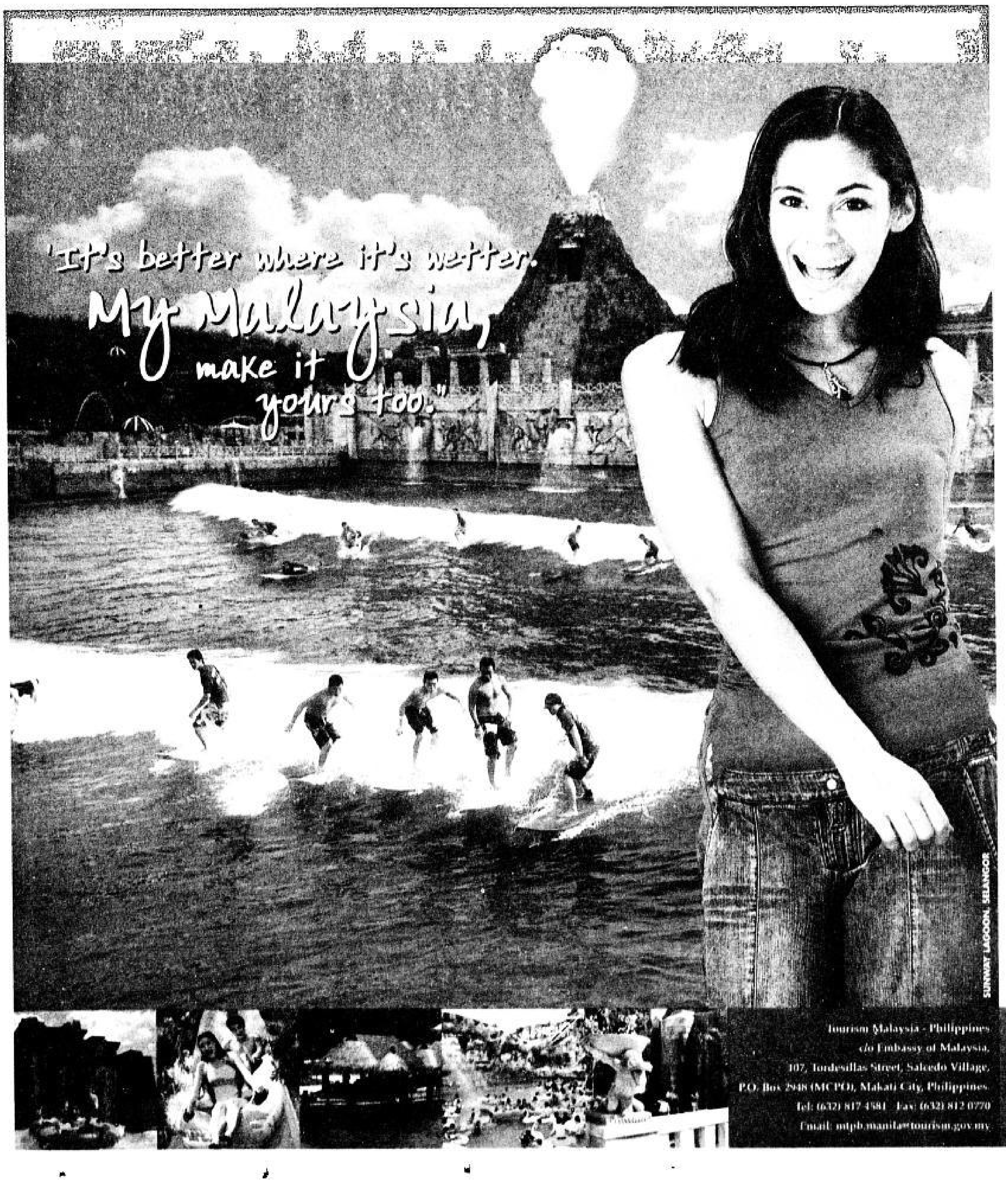
"Our groups of soldiers are sent one after another in the mountains and in the lowlands to go after the rebels," he said, citing the capture of NPA commander, Leopoldo Caluza, by the Nueva Ecija police in Baguio City.

Gomez was guest during the leadership training-seminar of the heads of various Barangay Defense Systems (BDS) in San Jose City over the weekend.

He said the BDS has been "doing wonders in the fight against insurgency and in maintaining peace and order." *Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon*



THE ARMY offensive against communist guerrillas goes down to the barangay level where villagers are bused to anticommunist rallies, like these residents of Quezon towns. RAFFY LERMA



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Higher prices traders' wish for vegetables this Christmas

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE province's vegetable farmers and traders have a common wish for the Christmas season—that the selling price of vegetables in the market go up and remain stable till next year.

They admitted, though, that their wish depended on the Bureau of Customs' ability to curb smuggling and on the Bureau of Plant Industry's resolve to issue import permits only when necessary.

More than 20 traders representing various trade groups at the vegetable trading post here asked agriculture and trade officials to be on the alert for the possibility of a surge in legally imported and smuggled vegetables this season.

In a meeting on Dec. 2, the traders told provincial board member John Kim that the rush of foreign vegetables in 2002-2003 that almost caused the collapse of the local vegetable industry must be avoided.

They complained that there were already some imported vegetables, like celery, cauliflower, broccoli and carrots, being sold in Manila and that their buyers showed preference for them.

This indicated the possibility that more shipments would enter the country in the days ahead, they said.

Kim, chair of the provincial board's committee on agriculture, said he would welcome any move by the traders to put on guard the BOC, BPI, trade and agriculture departments on the entry of foreign vegetables. *Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

DEATH IN IRAQ

Hero's burial set for Fil-Am soldier

By Gabriel Cardinoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—AMERICAN Army Staff Sgt. Richwell Doria had planned to come home to visit his parents here when his contract with the US Army expired in 2008.

He wanted to introduce his wife, Jasmine and four-year-old daughter Jada to his parents Fred and Rosario Doria.

But Doria's homecoming came earlier and unexpected.

On Monday, he arrived here at dawn in a casket and he would be buried today (Dec. 5) on the eve of his 26th birthday.

"We are sad, very sad because he is gone. He was like my own son," said Zenaida Anderson, Doria's childless aunt, who also served as his guardian until he moved to San Diego, California. Since he was 12, Doria had been adopted by his grandfather.

Doria's parents were too grief-stricken to talk to reporters.

"I used to throw parties when he celebrated his birthdays and he invited his classmates and friends," Anderson said.

But this time, Doria's parents and other relatives will be lighting candles on his grave, not on his cake.

He will be given a heroes' burial at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park here with US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney and other US Embassy and military officials in attendance.

"This is what he had always wanted to do. When he applied in the Army, we tried to discourage him," Anderson said.

She said she learned that Doria would be assigned to an infantry and she would later learn from friends that in an infantry, "it's shoot and duck."

Doria died on Nov. 7 in Kirkuk, Iraq, after he was struck by small arms fire during an air assault mission.

Anderson said on the day Doria died, she dreamed that black flower petals were falling from her hair.

"It was such a bad dream. But I never gave it any meaning because sometimes, when we go to sleep, we really have bad dreams," she said.

At about 10 a.m. the following day, she said, her father, Benito Doria, called her to tell her that some soldiers were looking for her.

"I knew right away that something bad happened to Richwell," Anderson said. "But I was hoping that he was just hurt," she added.

She could not give details on the circumstances that led to her nephew's death.

But the Honolulu Advertiser in Hawaii reported that Doria's team was on a rescue mission that day. "He jumped out of the helicopter to go and get more guys when he got attacked and shot. He was transported to the hospital but was dead on arrival," the report said quoting a US Army chaplain.

Anderson said she would miss Doria's calls and visits. She said that whenever he had the opportunity, Doria never failed to call from wherever he was.

"In fact, in our conversations at home, we always asked if Rich had already called. If he didn't call in one week, we'd ask one another why," she said.

The last time she talked with Doria on the phone, Anderson said, he was telling her that he had a cellular phone but in his assignment in Iraq, they were not allowed to use it.

"I even asked him about the situation in his place of assignment and he told me that it was quite dangerous. So I told him to be careful," Anderson said.

Doria was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Regiment, Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

He was sent to Iraq on Aug. 7 this year, after his tour of duty in Afghanistan.

He served as a rifleman, M203 gunner, machine gun operator, team leader and as a squad leader while with the Cacti Battalion in Operation Iraqi Freedom V, according to a memorial service pamphlet of the US Army's 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment.

"All those who had the pleasure of knowing him appreciated his great sense of humor and honesty. (His) contribution to Alpha Company can be seen in the heart and soul of every member. He will be truly missed," the US Army said.

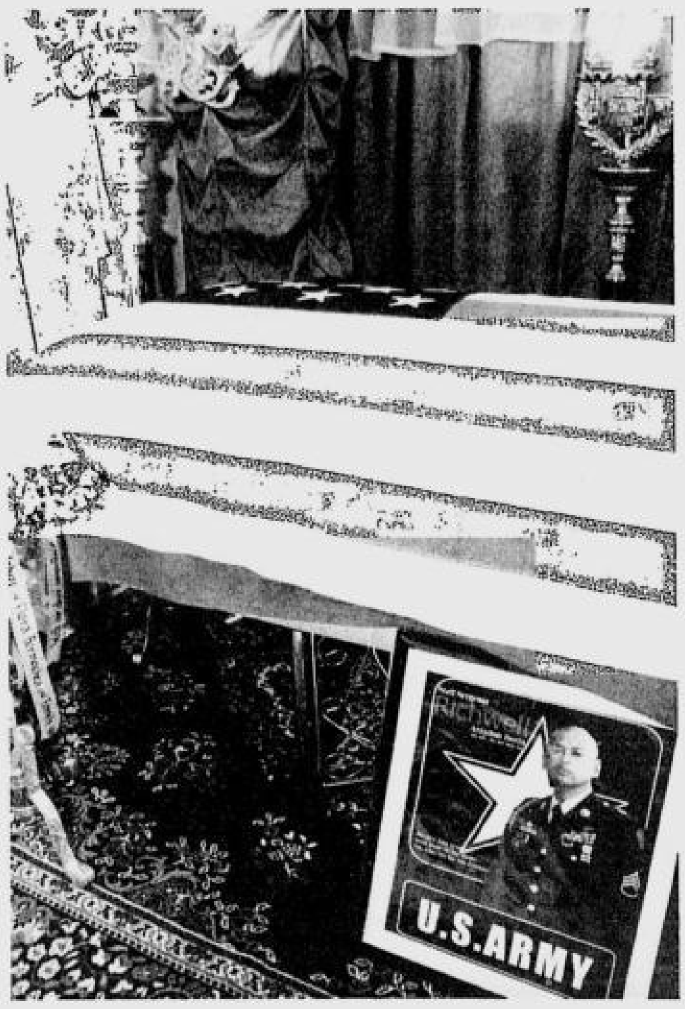
Doria enlisted with the US Army in August 2000 after graduating from the Samuel F.B. Morse High School in San Diego that year.

After completing his basic and advanced individual training at Fort Benning in Georgia in 2001, he was assigned to Hawaii.

Before his interment, Doria will be posthumously awarded the Army commendation medal with "V" device for valor for "his actions on Nov. 1, 2006 (that) helped save the lives of two fellow soldiers following an (enemy) attack."

He will also receive the bronze star and Purple Heart medal for his "courageous actions on Nov. 7, 2006 where he made the ultimate sacrifice while providing covering fire for his soldiers."

THE REMAINS of US Army Staff Sergeant Richwell Doria, who died in Iraq, were brought home in Dagupan City Dec. 4.
RAY ZAMBRANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON



ROUNDUP

NPA rebel slain in clash

LUCENA CITY—A suspected New People's Army rebel was killed in an encounter on Wednesday with government forces in Barangay Villa Reyes, San Narciso, Quezon, according to the military. Lt. Col. Rhoderick Parayno, spokesperson of the Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar here, said soldiers chanced upon at least 10 heavily armed rebels in Sitio Kumaya at around 3:50 p.m. The rebels withdrew, leaving behind a dead comrade. The military has yet to identify the body.

Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Town police chief relieved

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The police chief in Gonzaga town was relieved following the Nov. 27 killing of an official of a militant farmers' group. Senior Supt. James Andres Melad, Cagayan police director, said he relieved Senior Insp. Roberto Caronan for command responsibility and installed Chief Insp. Franklin Tagufa, who was told to form a new team that would look into the killing of Anthony Licyayo, 38, chair of the Kagimungan-Cagayan Valley. In a press forum on Wednesday, Melad disputed claims of leftist groups that police did not immediately respond to the killing.

Villamor Visaya Jr. and Estanislao Caldez, Inquirer Northern Luzon

16 in blast fishing arrested

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Sixteen fishermen, including two minors, were arrested on Nov. 28 in the waters off the Hundred Islands National Park in Alaminos City while they were fishing with the use of dynamite. Supt. Amando Lagiwid, director of the 106th Provincial Mobile Group, said a police team was patrolling the area when it heard dynamite blasts. Lagiwid said the fishermen were in two motorized boats and had 10 bottles of improvised dynamite filled with ammonium nitrate.

Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Army releases 5 farmers

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The military on Saturday released five farmers arrested by soldiers after an encounter with New People's Army rebels in Quezon, Nueva Ecija, on Friday. Lt. Col. Gregory Cayetano, commander of the Army's 71st Infantry Battalion, said the five were freed after background checks on them by Army and police intelligence units proved that they had no links with communist rebels. Cayetano said the farmers were turned over to the police's Provincial Mobile Group. Soldiers clashed with 10 rebels in Barangay Ilog Baliwag on Friday. No casualties were reported.

Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Chinese firecrackers seized

BACOLOD CITY—Forty-two boxes of pyrotechnics and firecrackers made in China were seized by police at J.T. Marketing on Luzuriaga Street here on Wednesday. A policeman who posed as a buyer of the goods worth about P20,000 handed P1,000 in marked money to the cashier. Chief Insp. Armando Tubongbanua of the City Mobile Group said charges would be filed against the firm's manager Grace Gochi Chin, 29, for violation of Republic Act No. 7183, which regulates the sale, manufacture and distribution of pyrotechnics and devices. Chin will also be charged with violation of City Ordinance 816 banning the sale of pyrotechnics outside the designated area at the reclamation area, Tubongbanua said. *Carla Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

Davao-Manado route opened

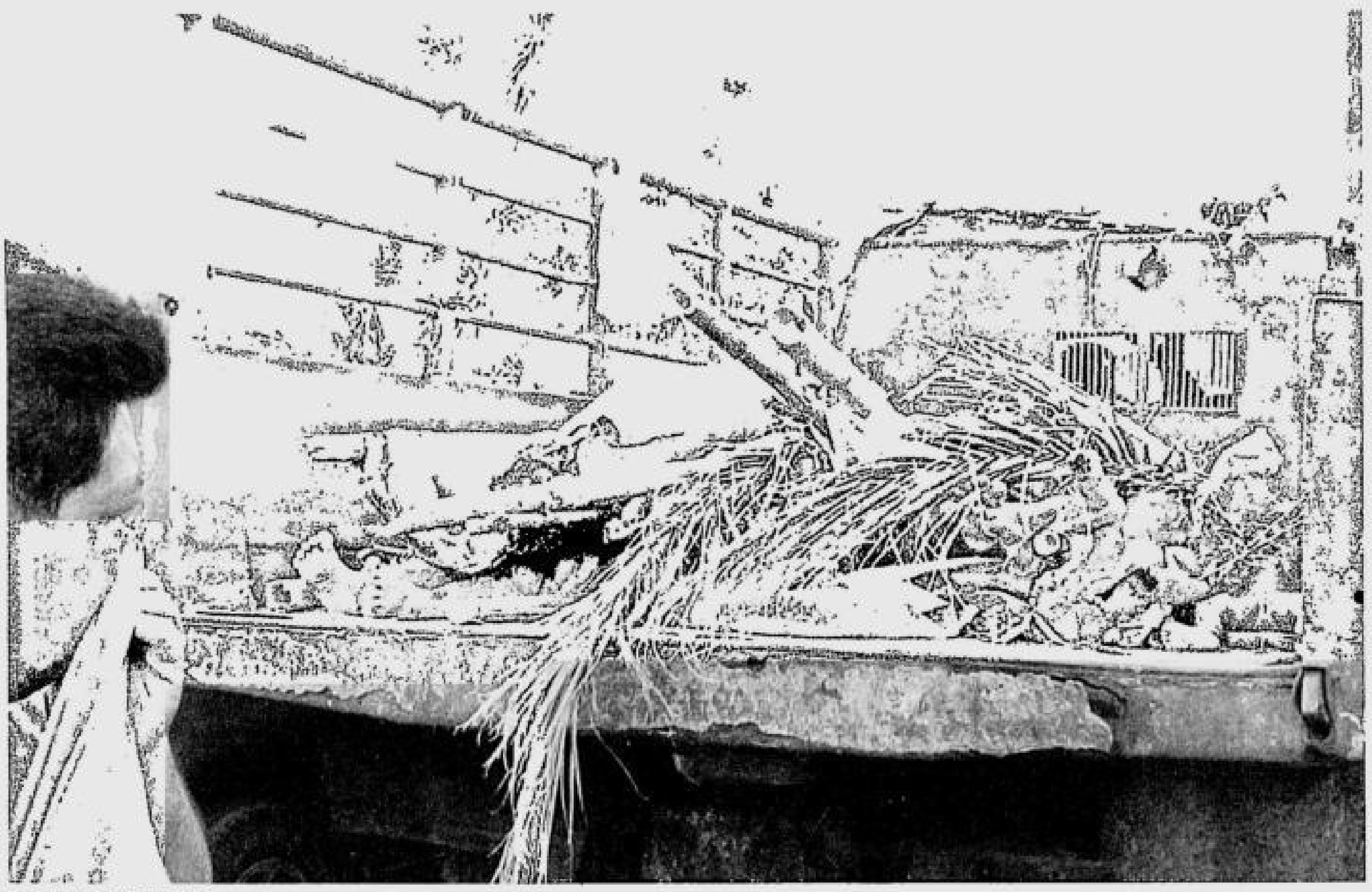
DAVAO CITY—Indonesian airline Sriwijaya announced on Thursday the opening of the Davao-Manado route to cater to more business and tourist passengers. Aditya Wardana, commercial director of the Jakarta-based airlines, said the company had acquired a new Boeing 737-200, which could accommodate at least 125 passengers. The airline leaves Davao City to Manado at 10:45 a.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. Indonesian Consul Bambang Gunawan said the opening of the air route would mean "more business opportunities and more tourism arrivals" and "strengthen cultural exchange" between the Philippines and Indonesia.

Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao

9 vehicles recovered in Angeles

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Nine vehicles believed to have been stolen were recovered by police from a house at Essel Park near Angeles City on Friday. Teams from the San Fernando and Quezon City police held four people found in the house. Supt. Alex Sintin, Quezon City police intelligence chief, said a car that policemen tailed from Quezon City to Bulacan and Pampanga on Friday noon led to the discovery of the compound. Police found three Mitsubishi Pajero, a Nissan Urvan, a Toyota Rav4, an Isuzu Sportivo, an Isuzu Crosswind, a Nissan Sentra and a Nissan Delica. Supt. Audie Atienza, city police chief, said equipment used to erase the engine numbers and several sets of car plates were also found.

Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon



NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

DEATH TRUCK
Bodies are loaded in a dump truck for lack of other ways to transport them from disaster areas in Albay province, that suffered most from the onslaught of Supertyphoon Reming, to burial sites.

GSIS offices to remain open in Bicol

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INsurance System (GSIS) yesterday said all its three field offices in the Bicol region will remain open to service approximately 80,000 GSIS members and pensioners there.

GSIS President and General Manager Winston Garcia, in a statement, said GSIS employees in the Naga, Legaspi, and Sorsogon field offices will report for work, despite receiving reports that their offices suffered damages due to the onslaught of Supertyphoon Reming.

Garcia said these GSIS field offices will be ready to accept claims and loan applications from members. These will also release pension checks.

He, however, said that processing of claims and loans may face minimal delays until electricity and communication lines are fully restored in the region.

The three GSIS field offices service a total of 70,805 active members and 8,323 pensioners.

The GSIS chief also thanked GSIS employees in these offices for volunteering to report for work to serve GSIS members and pensioners, despite reports that they, too, were not spared by the supertyphoon.

Thieves blamed for prolonged blackout

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—Thieves are to blame for a prolonged power outage in Quezon province that was initially caused by strong winds toppling electric towers, an official of the Office of Civil Defense said yesterday.

Armando Duque, OCD-Calabarzon director, said the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) reported that more than 100 electric towers had become weak because its nuts and bolts have been removed by thieves, most of whom were residents of communities near the towers.

He said he personally saw the fallen towers when they made an aerial survey in the area last Saturday.

Transco gave its word that it would try to start supplying power to some parts of southern Quezon this coming weekend, he said.

He said at least 11 towns in the area have experienced power outage since Thursday.

"The damages on the towers were really beyond repair. If Transco can repair the damages, it would take some time before we could restore power," Duque told the INQUIRER.

He said it would be more economically viable if Transco built a new power line from Lucena City as the government-owned electric firm's service station in Gumaca town has yet to be repaired.

Duque said he sympathized with the complaint of officials from Quezon who lamented that while they host power plants in Mauban and Pagbilao, their source of power comes from the Bicol region. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Preparedness worked for Camarines Sur

CAMARINES SUR GOV. LUIS RAYmund "Lray" Villafuerte said that even before Supertyphoon "Reming" hit the Bicol region, the provincial government has already prepared for the worse, starting with the evacuation of residents in coastal areas and those prone to landslides and flash floods.

In a statement, Villafuerte said this explains the low number of casualties in the province. Only 10 people were listed dead as a result of Reming.

But the governor said 32 electric towers were toppled in the province while more than half of its schools were destroyed.

The province, he said, suffered an estimated P700 million in damage to schools and agriculture.

Teams are moving around the province to inspect other damages.

"What is noteworthy is the fact that the casualty rate, based on feedback from the field, seems to be low. I think the early evacuation of residents in critical areas helped minimize the number of casualties," Villafuerte said.

"We did not want to take any chances," he said.

Evacuation centers, he said, were being manned by provincial social welfare and health personnel while teams were moving around for deployment in areas where residents need not be evacuated but were nonetheless expected to be affected by the typhoon.

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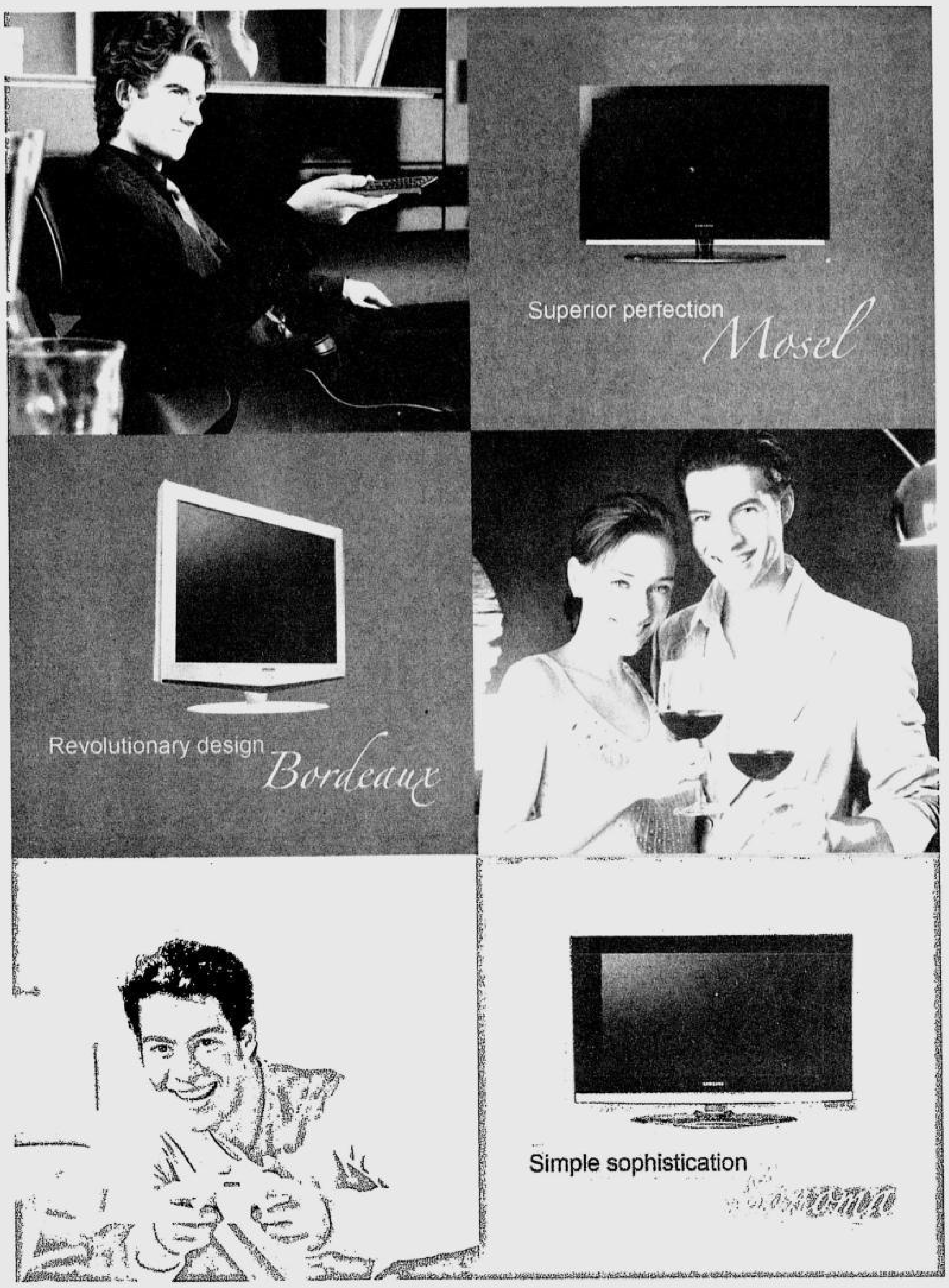
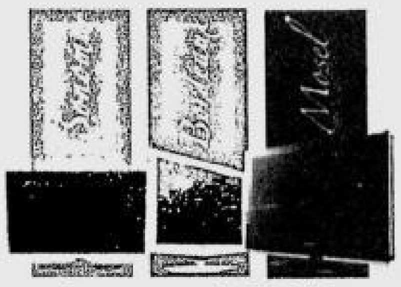
Erap sets Tanay wedding for son JV





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Court OK sought for Feb. 3 bash

By Norman Bordadora and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DEPOSED PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan Special Division to allow his son, San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito, to hold his wedding at the former leader's estate in Tanay, Rizal where he is detained for plunder charges.

In a motion filed through lawyer J. Alberto Flaminiano, Estrada asked the court to allow him to receive in his detention area some 200 visitors of the San Juan mayor who will wed Cindy Lotunco on Feb. 3, 2007.

According to the motion, the wedding ceremony will be held at 3 p.m. and the reception will last until 10 p.m.

Estrada said he would comply with any condition that the court may impose in connection with this motion.

The holding of such occasions at Estrada's detention home, with so many guests, needs to be approved by the court.

Meanwhile, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito confirmed he is getting married in February 2007 but he refused to provide details.

"This is supposed to be a secret," Ejercito, told the INQUIRER, sounding surprised to be interviewed about his wedding plans.

"I want it to be as private as possible. We will only invite our relatives and close friends," said the 36-year-old town mayor who is Estrada's son with Guia Gomez.

Ejercito said he would hold the wedding somewhere in Tanay, Rizal. He did not specify however if the rites would be held at his father's rest house, where Estrada is under "rest house arrest."

Pressed for specific details, Ejercito just said "I don't want it to be like a fiesta. I want it to be intimate."

Ejercito has recently announced plans of running for the Senate in the next election. He is on his second term as town mayor.

Car thefts down, says PNP exec

By Alcuin Papa

CARJACKING INCIDENTS DECREASED by 16 percent this year compared to 2005, according to an official of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Traffic Management Group (TMG).

There were 1,000 vehicles stolen this year and at least 271 of them were recovered, said Chief Supt. Errol Pan, PNP-TMG director, in his speech yesterday during the agency's 52nd founding anniversary at Camp Crame, Quezon City.

Pan said they neutralized six carjacking syndicates in the country.

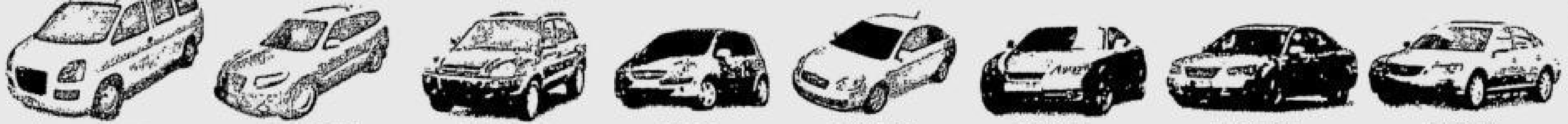
He also said there was a 50 percent decrease in the number of hijacking incidents (trucks are stopped and their goods stolen) this year compared to 2005.

Pan credited their "accomplishments" to "the cooperation of the civilian community in reporting car thefts."

"We [in the PNP-TMG] have implemented innovative approaches in the neutralization of 'carnappers' and hijackers that led to their neutralization," he said. "We are confident that with our intensified campaign against these criminals, they will face their untimely defeat."

Among those who attended the PNP-TMG anniversary celebration were PNP chief Director General Oscar Calderon and Department of Transportation and Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza, who was the guest of honor and speaker.

HYUNDAI Sucat



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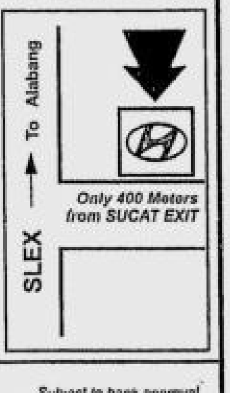

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Malaking na haligi ng inyong kinabukasan

NBI to hold alleged shabu den operator

Court decision cites security concerns of suspect, wife

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE COURT YESTERDAY ALlowed the alleged owner of a compound of shabu dens in Pasig City and his second wife to remain in the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Following normal procedure, Amin Imam Boratong and Sheryl Molera would have been transferred to the Pasig City Jail.

Both, however, had told the court that their lives would be in danger if they were to be detained within the city, with Boratong even alleging that city policemen could be after him.

Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 154 Judge Abraham Borreta yesterday said that he found the reasons given by the suspects "very plausible and highly probable.

"It is likely that there are certain elements who would want to silence them permanently," he added.

"Certainly, the Court would not want to put the life and security of the two accused in jeopardy," the judge said in his decision.

Boratong, who was arrested two weeks ago after hiding from authorities for almost eight months, has been accused of maintaining the compound of drug dens in Pasig which was raided in February.

The same charge was also filed against Molera, in addition to possession of illegal drugs.

The judge, however, was quick to point out that the continued detention of the accused at the NBI until further orders from the court should not be considered as special treatment.

"Justice would be better served if the life and safety of the accused are properly secured in the course of the trial and until judgment is rendered," Borreta added.

Boratong's lawyer, Raymond Fortun, earlier told the INQUIRER his client had to be protected from the Pasig City police, which he claimed had shown "marked bias" for Boratong's alleged former right hand man, Samer Palao.

Palao had earlier tagged Boratong as the maintainer of the drug dens.

Senior Supt. Francisco Uyami, Pasig police chief, meanwhile, claimed Fortun "is dreaming."

He added that the city police should secure Boratong in the event that he is transferred to the Pasig City Jail in Barangay Pinagbuhatan.

After pleading not guilty to the charges against him during his arraignment last week, Boratong had filed a motion asking the court that he be allowed to stay under the custody of the NBI.

Fortun asked that Boratong be detained anywhere but in Pasig City—and even suggested that Boratong could be detained at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology facility in Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, just like Atong Ang.

Ang, a coaccused of jailed former President Joseph Estrada who is facing plunder charges, has been detained at the Taguig facility after he was extradited from the United States.

Molera also made a similar request to the court.

In a separate motion, she told the court that if she would be transferred from the NBI, "her life would be imperiled by unscrupulous police officers who at the very outset had been extorting money from her."

Ex-CIDG deputy chief is new NPD director

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE FORMER HEAD OF TASK Force Newsman is the new director of the Northern Police District.

Chief Supt. Pedro Tango, a graduate of Class 1977 of the Philippine Military Academy who is also a lawyer, took over the post yesterday morning, replacing Supt. Rufino Druja who held the post in an acting capacity.

Prior to his new assignment, Tango was the deputy chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

Task Force Newsman was created by President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2004 to address the increasing number of killings involving media men.

According to INQUIRER research records, 25 journalists have been killed since 2005. Four of the murders occurred in Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela—areas under the jurisdiction of the NPD.

Tango yesterday said he would focus on the three-tiered defense system of the Philippine National Police which consists of security tightening, fighting insurgency and terrorism.

He also promised to continue the law enforcement and community relations projects started by previous NPD directors.

Tango told the INQUIRER that he would order a thorough investigation of the cases related to the killing of RPN 9 cameraman Ralph Ruñez.

These include the killing of the father of Charles Galarce, the star witness in the Ruñez case, and the death of another suspect, Ernani Magnayon.

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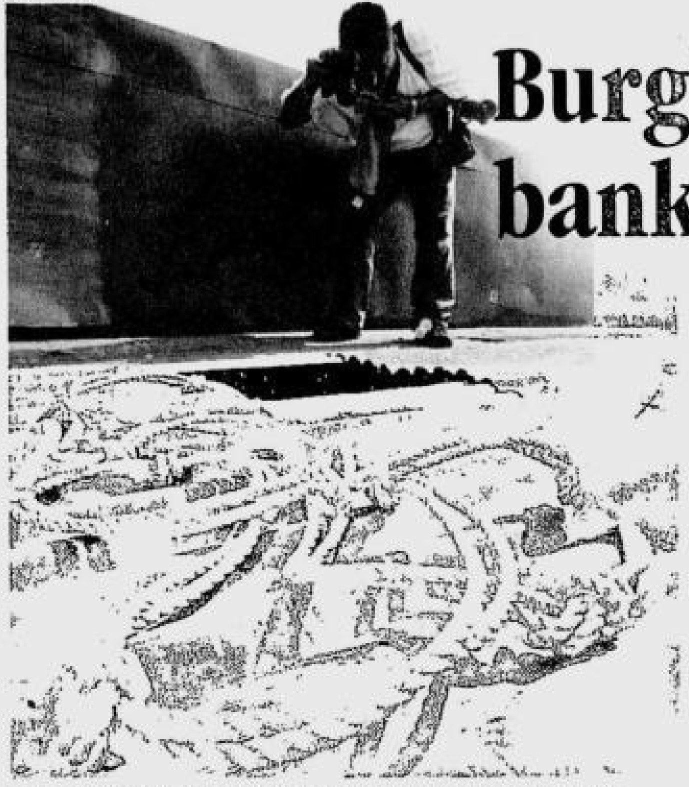
Burglars break into QC bank but fail to open vault



ROBBERS opened up a portion of the roof to enter the Bank of Commerce branch on Quezon Avenue. JOAN BONDOC

By DJ Yap

BURGLARS BROKE INTO A BANK OF COMmerce branch in Quezon City over the weekend but left empty-handed after they failed to open the vault, police said yesterday.

The unidentified suspects managed to pry open part of the roof to get inside the bank at the corner of Quezon Avenue and Examiner Streets in Barangay West Triangle, investigators added.

The break-in occurred between 6:55 p.m. of Nov. 30 when the bank closed and early yesterday morning when a watchman noticed the hole in the roof and alerted barangay officials, police said.

Other signs of forced entry were later discovered when Claudio Gainsan, a watchman, entered the bank at past 8 a.m.

But the suspects, believed to be members of the "Acetylene Gang," had apparently failed to open the bank vault using an acetylene torch, said Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula, the director of the Quezon City Police District.

Acetylene is a colorless, highly flammable or explosive gas used for metal welding and cutting.

"We know they were not able to take any cash, but the bank manager is still conducting an inventory just the same to determine if the suspects were able to run away with any other valuables," Gatdula said.

In his report, PO3 Jonathan Bustarde of the Baler Police Station said the bank incurred "no reported losses." The case was later turned over to the criminal investigation division of the QCPD.

It was not immediately clear how many suspects there were, but police believe they stayed at a nearby hotel or a rented apartment unit days before the heist.

Suspected illegal recruiter nabbed by cops in Manila

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE MANILA POLICE DISTRICT (MPD) arrested a suspected illegal recruiter last week for allegedly duping at least five victims of their hard-earned money.

MPD director Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa identified the suspect as Teodoro Baldeo Jr.

According to Abarzosa, the suspect was arrested during an entrapment operation last Nov. 29 after Danny Fajardo and three other victims complained about his illegal activities.

The suspect now faces charges. of large scale estafa and illegal recruitment in the Manila City Prosecutor's Office, the police chief said.

Agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Nov. 28 also arrested three alleged illegal recruiters, who promised their victims jobs in Italy but left them stranded in Morocco, in an entrapment operation.

NBI Director Nestor Mantaring identified the suspects as Elvira Garcia, a resident of Barrio Lalaan II, Aguinaldo Highway, Cavite; Enid Lagura, of 16 Josephine Estrada St., BFRV, Las Piñas City and Rogelio Garcia, of F. Manalo St., Greymarville Subd. in Talon, Las Piñas City.

Mantaring said the three face charges for violation of Republic Act 8042 or the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995, Republic Act 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, and Article 315 of the Revised Penal Code.

3 hurt in Pasig explosion

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THREE PERSONS WERE HURT WHEN an explosive believed to be a pillbox blew up in front of the usually crowded Mutya ng Pasig Public Market in Pasig City on Sunday night.

PO3 Enrique Jimenez told the INQUIRER that two groups of vendors were overheard yelling at one another on Market Avenue at about 7 p.m. Sunday.

Suddenly, a minor explosion was heard. Jimenez said no witness had surfaced so far to pinpoint who had hurled the pillbox.

The explosion was minor and caused insignificant damage—but at least three vendors were hurt by shrapnel, Jimenez added.

They were identified as Ligaya Aga, 44; Renato Bandin, 44 and market operation group officer in charge Lovely Dare, 47.

Their injuries, however, were minor, the policeman added.

Police said follow-up units were still tracking down those who could have hurled the alleged pillbox.

At the same time, operatives of the Pasig police explosives and ordinance division were already analyzing the recovered parts of the alleged pillbox.

DID YOU KNOW

ATENEO de Manila University started out as the Escuela Municipal de Manila, the only primary school in Manila in 1859. A private school (partly subsidized by the *ayuntamiento*) for 33 children of Spanish residents, it was located in Intramuros. The school was renamed Ateneo Municipal de Manila in 1865 when it started offering secondary education. In 1901, the American colonial government withdrew subsidy for the school. It later became known as the Ateneo de Manila, which became a university on Dec. 11, 1959, its centennial year. Its current main campus is in Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

METROBRIEFS

Guilt made him cry

HIS TEARS gave him away. Police arrested a housekeeper after he allegedly took P270,000 in cash from the bedroom of his employer in Marikina City on Sunday. Businesswoman Paz Jemolo, 75, told the police she discovered that the cash she had kept inside her room was missing. Since there were no signs of forcible entry, investigators suspected that the robber was someone who had access to the house in Parkland Estate in Barangay Malanday. While talking to her employees, Jemolo noticed Ruel Constantino, her housekeeper, looked nervous, police chief Supt. Sotero Ramos told the INQUIRER. Investigators also talked to Constantino who broke down during the interview, Ramos said. "He also admitted he kept the cash in the house of one of his relatives," the police official added.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Two rob suspects fall

TWO MEN, one of them a minor, were arrested for allegedly robbing a store inside a public high school in Taguig City on Sunday night. The police identified one of the suspects as Jonathan Palloria, 20. According to Insp. Elden Modequillo, Palloria and his companion broke into the store inside the Signal National High School at around 8:30 p.m. Sunday and took several appliances and grocery items. The theft, however, was discovered by Lalinda de Vera, a teacher of the school who also ran the store. She immediately reported the incident to the police who conducted a follow-up operation that led to the suspects' arrest.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Donations for Bicol mudslide victims welcome

CALLING on all Bicolanos and other generous souls who want to help victims of the mudslides in Albay as a result of Supertyphoon "Reming." Donations either in kind or in cash are welcome and may be coursed through their concerned provincemates working at the Manila International Airport Authority. Donors may contact Dante Basanta at 8771761, Andrew Balde, 8771109 local 3439/3440/3441 and the Office of the Assistant General Manager for Security and General Services at 8333806 local 3678. Authorities have said that the death toll from the typhoon may climb to 1,000. Most of the people affected were from Albay.

A wish for a speedy recovery

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I AM HAPPY THAT THE ANGIOPLASTY on First Gentleman Mike Arroyo turned out well.

Honest. Mr. Arroyo and I were once friends. For old time's sake, I wish him a speedy recovery.

But here's my unsolicited advice to my former friend: Forgive and forget.

Stop harboring ill feelings toward your perceived enemies. It's not only Christian to do so, it's also good for your health.

Don't listen to the prodding of your friends and lawyers to file libel and other cases against journalists who have written unsavory articles about you. They don't have your best interest in mind.

Such people feed on your ego. They would laugh at you and call you *ututo* if you had a heart attack because of intense anger.

I was worried Friday when I heard the news you were rushed to the hospital. Now, I'm relieved that the medical procedure on you was successful.

But if you keep getting mad at journalists whom you consider enemies, chances are the block in your artery will recur. I asked doctor-friends the main reason for the blocked artery. They told me it was due more to stress than the junk food you've eaten over the years.

I am not writing this to ask you to forgive me and drop the charges you've filed against me. I insist I haven't done you anything wrong.

That will happen the next time around.

* * *

Last year, when I was still in the good graces of the Arroyos, I advised President Macapagal-Arroyo to send her husband Mike on a long vacation because of the adverse publicity about him.

The Arroyos took my advice. The First Gentleman went to San Francisco, California and was there at the height of the President's worst personal crisis brought about by the "Hello Garci" scandal. When Mike came back from the United States, he looked healthy and well-rested a few months before the Yuletide season last year.

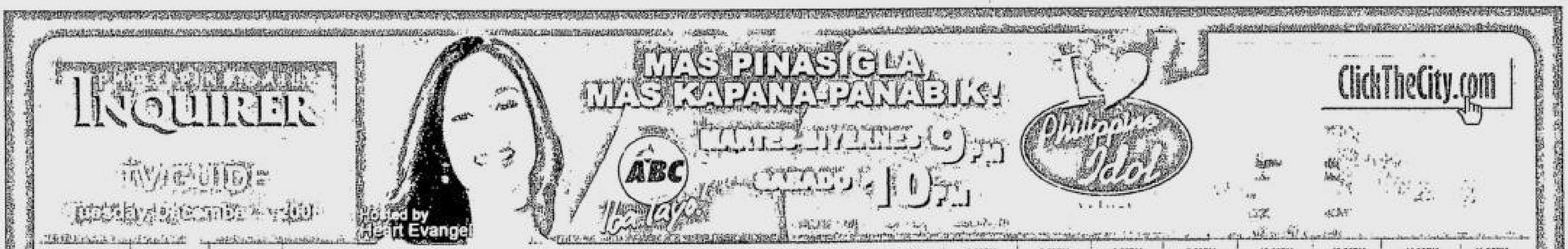
I would give the same advice, this time unsolicited. A vacation would avoid bad publicity about Mike Arroyo.

* * *

The shooting rampage inside Camp Crame, general headquarters of the Philippine National Police (PNP), involving a police doctor as the assailant and other doctors as victims, cannot be dismissed as an isolated incident.

The incident was a reflection of the PNP's present leadership and the indiscipline in the ranks.

An incident of this nature never took place in the past.



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ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (Degeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Blow Out 1		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
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Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Just Cause		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Family Law		Judging Amy		Much Ado About Nothing			
HBO	Dolores Claiborne (2:45 PM)					American Flyers				Darkman			The Big Preview: Deja Vu	Man Of The House				Six Feet Under 6: All Alone	
Hero TV	Class Of The Titans	Sunny Pig	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar: A Little Snow Fairy	Last Exile	Naruto	Transformers Armada	Saiyuki Reload	Full Metal Panic	Galaxy Angels	Voltes V Evolution	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Naruto	Combattler V	Class Of The Titans	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Barbie On The Go	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics Airs		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics Airs	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		Experience		Heat		X-Men Evolution	Justice League	Bottomline		Mad TV		Just For Laughs	Jamie Kennedy Experiment	My Name Is Earl	Always Sunny In Philadelphia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	Wolfgang Puck	My Country, My Kitchen	Rachel Ray		Sensible Chic	At Home With	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Martha		E! News Weekend		Rachel Ray		Whose Wedding Is It Anyway?		Napa Style	Sheila Bridges Designer Living
MTV Philippines		Sessions Salamin	VH1 All Access: Young, Hot Hollywood		Pimp My Ride	Cribs	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	8 Things About Salamin	2005 MTV Music Summit for HIV/Aids pt1				2005 MTV Music Summit for HIV/Aids pt2			
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX Versions	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYXellaneous	Radio MYX	MYX News	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Wild Indonesia		Mad Lab	Mad Lab	Top 5		Nat'l Geographic Specials				Mad Lab	Mad Lab	Air Crash Investigation		Hunter Hunted	
NBN					[illegible] Mo Ba Sila	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig Ng Bayan		Talakayan Sa Isyung Pulis		Teledyaryo Final Edition		World Pool Championship					
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubunyag		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Mark B. Pop [illegible]				Boda De Plata				Mauna Ka, Susunod Ako				Magdusa Ka				[illegible] Hang-gang Sa Huli [illegible]
Qtv	Pawnshop No. 8	Samurai X	Hikaru No Go	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle	Extreme Makeover: Home Edition		News On Q	Sana'y Muling Makapiling		Irene	
RPN 9	TV Shopping	Golf Power		Fistorama	Mr. Fighting	RPN Aksyon Balita		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	Project Runway		Australia's Next Top Model		Good Girls Don't	Sex & the City	Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Treat		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng [illegible]		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports										Boxing: Bautista vs Andrade				ITZ		Sportsdesk		Asian Games	
Star Movies			Patch Adams (3:20 PM)			Home Alone (5:15 PM)				GoldenEye (7:05 PM)				I, Robot				De-Lovely	
Star World	Becker	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Desire: Table For Three		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	One Tree Hill		Desperate Housewives		Desire: Table For Three		Seinfeld	One Tree Hill
Studio 23								Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup	Gilmore Girls	Smallville (8:15 PM)		24		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXlog
UnTV				KNC Show	Kakampi Mo Ang Batas		[illegible] Kaagapay Nyo		Public Hearing	Make My Day		Ang Dating Daan (8:15 PM)							

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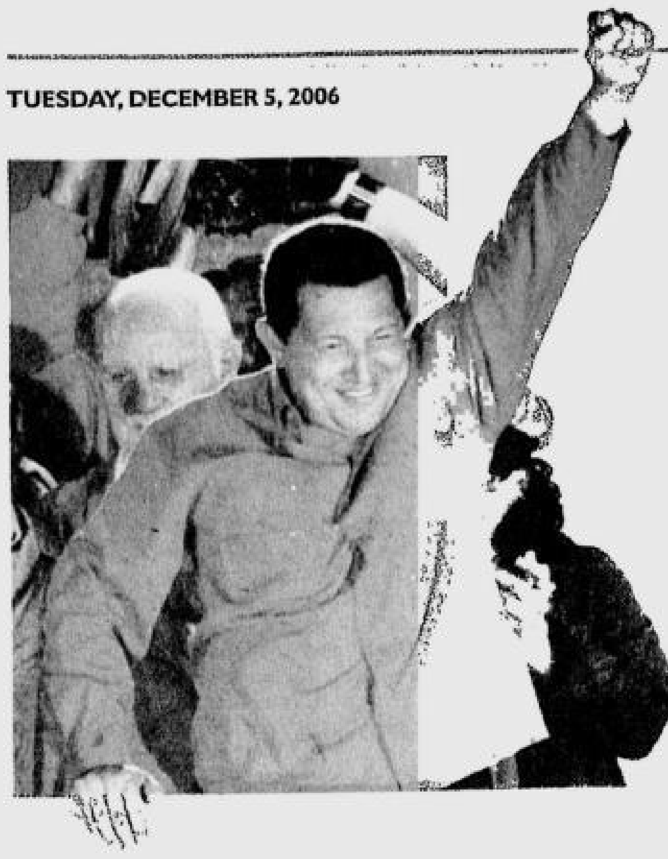


Chavez wins by landslide

CARACAS, VENEZUELA—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez stormed to a reelection victory in Sunday's vote, handing him an ample mandate to broaden his promised socialist revolution and challenge Washington's influence in Latin America.

Dressed in his signature red shirt, Chavez told cheering supporters at his presidential palace late Sunday his landslide was a blow to US President George W. Bush's administration, which portrays the leftist as an antidemocratic menace.

"Today we gave another lesson in dignity to the imperialists, it is another defeat for the empire of Mr. Danger," Chavez roared from a balcony above the crowds using one of the insults he has tossed at the US president.

The former soldier's victory will further rile the White House, which worries about Chavez destabilizing Latin America neighbors and strengthening ties between the Opec heavyweight Venezuela and US foes Cuba and Iran.

The National Electoral Council said Chavez won 61 percent of the vote while rival Manuel Rosales, a governor of an oil-producing province who managed to unite the fractured opposition, won 38 percent after nearly 80 percent of the vote had been counted.

Chavez is the fourth leftist to win an election in Latin America in the past five weeks.

Ecuador's Rafael Correa, who calls himself an ally of the Venezuelan, won a run-off last week after promising sweeping political reforms. Leftists Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Brazil and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua also have won recent presidential elections.

Rosales, who for many opposition supporters was a bright hope to beat Chavez, acknowledged defeat but promised to keep fighting. He was greeted by cries of "coward" by some upset supporters as he left his campaign headquarters.

"We recognize they beat us today but we will continue the fight," said Rosales, 53, who drew his main support from the middle and upper classes in the polarized nation.

The country's opposition movement struggled to challenge Chavez after he defeated a recall referendum in 2004. Many opposition supporters believe Chavez has an unfair advantage by controlling key institutions such as the election council.

But supporters applaud the man they fondly call "El Comandante" for spending the country's soaring oil wealth on free health and education programs for the poor majority who feel long-abandoned by previous governments.

A retired army paratrooper who led a failed military rebellion before his 1998 election, Chavez has survived a brief coup, an oil strike and scores of demonstrations during his seven years in the Miraflores presidential palace.

Worrying his opponents, Chavez has vowed to use a fresh mandate to scrap presidential term limits and create a single-party that he expects to lead in power for decades.

Having already taken on multinational oil giants to demand they hand more control to the state, Chavez will likely press for more share of Venezuela's vast oil and mineral resources and increase land distribution for the rural poor. *Reuters*

Pinochet fights for life after heart attack

SANTIAGO, CHILE—FORMER CHILEAN dictator Augusto Pinochet fought to survive on Monday after a heart attack put him in a Santiago military hospital, while teary-eyed supporters of all ages held vigil outside.

Pinochet, 91, who ran Chile with brutal discipline for 17 years, was in stable but serious condition after an angioplasty on Sunday to unblock clogged arteries.

"It's difficult to say he is out of danger. The next 24 to 48 hours are critical," his doctor, Juan Ignacio Vergara, said on Sunday night. "There could be complications ... renal, respiratory failures." Before the angioplasty, Pinochet was given the Roman Catholic last rites traditionally administered by a priest to the dying. His son, Marco Antonio Pinochet, said Pinochet was brought back from near death.

PINOCHET

Doctors said they were trying to avoid surgery, which would be risky because of Pinochet's age.

Pinochet is accused of torture, killings, kidnappings and other human rights abuses in his 1973 coup and subsequent rule, when more than 3,000 people died in political violence, many at the hands of secret police.

Prosecutors have failed to bring the former dictator to trial, with his defense team always successfully arguing he was too ill to face charges.

Pinochet has been in frail health for some time and in recent weeks he has suggested his end could be near.

"Today, close to the end of my days, I want to make clear that I hold no rancor toward anybody, that I love my country above all else," he said in a statement on his 91st birthday last week.

In 2004, disclosures that he had stashed $27 million in secret offshore bank accounts during his presidency alienated many of his supporters. Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

Troops disarm police in Fiji

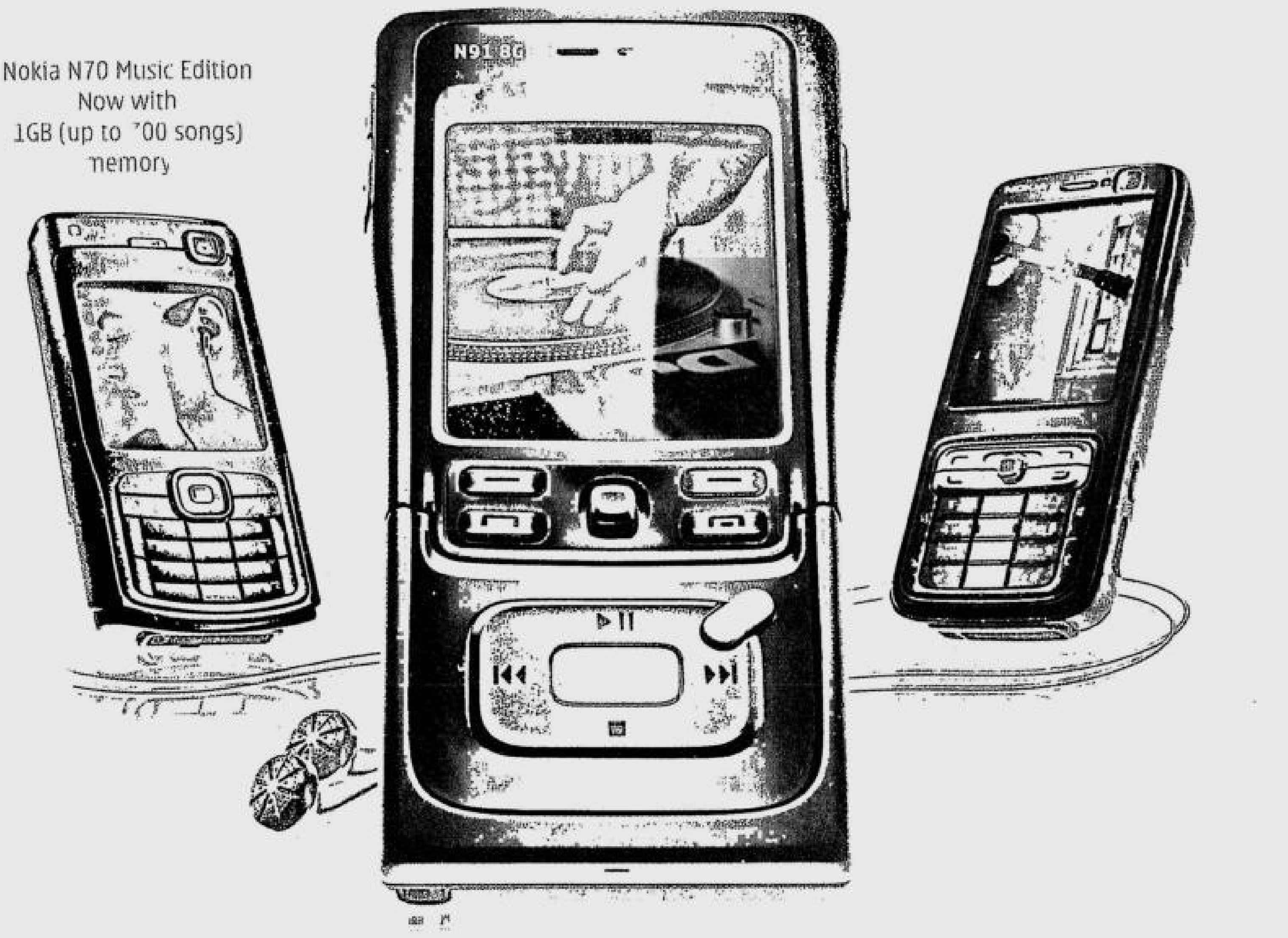
SUVA, Fiji—Troops entered at least two police compounds in Fiji and grabbed weapons on Monday, in the apparent first step toward seizing control of the South Pacific country. Fiji's acting Police Commissioner Moses Driver said he had no knowledge that the military have moved to replace the government, as has been repeatedly threatened by armed forces commander Commodore Frank Bainimarama. "Until now I have not concluded a coup d'etat is in place," Driver said. "This is only the disarming of the police." *AP*

Bush considers resumed oil drilling off Alaska

WASHINGTON—President Bush is considering whether to lift the 17-year-old moratorium on energy drilling in the waters off southwestern Alaska, a White House spokesperson said Sunday, which would allow oil and gas companies to try to tap into more than 5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas that lies beneath rich fishing grounds. The push to market oil and gas leases in these waters is part of a larger national effort to expand domestic supplies of fossil fuel by opening up areas of the outer continental shelf, long off-limits to energy development. In a letter to Bush on Friday, a coalition of environmental groups—including the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council—citing the impact of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, called the bay "an economically critical salmon fishery." *NYT*

Lawyers appeal Saddam death sentence

BAGHDAD—Lawyers for Saddam Hussein and two former aides sentenced to death lodged appeals on Sunday, the Iraqi chief prosecutor said, following a trial slammed by some human rights experts as unfair and flawed. The defense had been given until Tuesday to submit their appeals. The case is already with the appeals court, which will decide whether the hangings should be carried out. Meanwhile, Saddam is still on a trial for genocide against Kurds. *Reuters*



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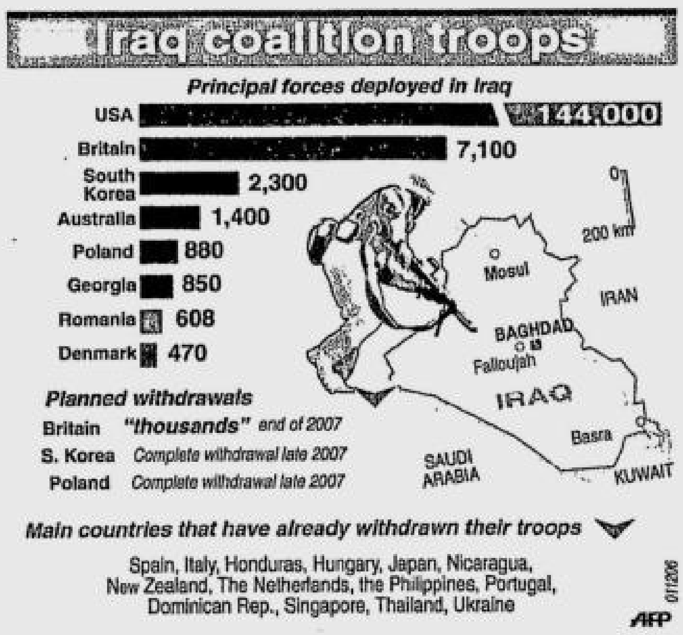
The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Annan says Iraq in grip of civil war



BAGHDAD—AT LEAST 30 IRAQIS WERE KILLED Sunday—a day after a deadly bomb attack in Baghdad—as outgoing UN chief Kofi Annan said the bloodshed in the violence-wracked country was worse than a civil war.

Annan's remark came a few hours after President Jalal Talabani became the second Iraqi leader, after powerful Shiite politician Abdel Aziz al-Hakim, to reject the UN chief's call for an international peace conference on Iraq.

Insurgents were back at work Sunday, when one wearing an explosive belt blew himself up next to a police station near the northern oil city of Kirkuk, killing three officers, Major General Torhan Yussef said.

Farther south, at least 16 people were murdered in and around the restive town of Baquba, according to security and medical sources.

And Shiite imam Taha Yassin, close to radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, was shot dead after evening prayers near his home in the southern city of Najaf.

Elsewhere 10 people were killed.

The US military reported the deaths of three more troops and confirmed that a pilot whose fighter plane crashed last week in northwestern Iraq was killed.

The fatalities took the military's losses since the March 2003 invasion to 2,888, according to an AFP count based on Pentagon figures.

On Sunday, shell-shocked Iraqis were also mourning the 60 victims from Saturday's triple car bombing when blasts tore through a crowded shopping street at nightfall.

After more than three and a half years of mounting sectarian conflict, the attack, while vicious, was neither unexpected nor especially deadly—more than 1,800 Iraqi civilians were slaughtered in November alone.

But each new massacre hammers a wedge deeper between Iraq's Sunni and Shiite communities and chips away at the credibility of the country's beleaguered unity government and the US-led coalition force propping it up.

On Sunday American soldiers killed six suspected insurgents, two women and a child when they called in an air strike to dislodge gunmen from a house west of Baghdad late Saturday, the military said.

As the carnage continued Annan called the sectarian bloodshed worse than civil war.

In an interview with the BBC, Annan said: "When we had the strife in Lebanon and other places, we called that a civil war—this is much worse."

Last week the world's top diplomat had called for an international conference on Iraq, an idea which was swiftly shot down by Talabani and Hakim.

"There's a political process ongoing in Iraq and there's a parliament which is the best in the region," Talabani said in a statement Sunday.

"We've become an independent sovereign state and it will be us who decides the future of our country."

Meanwhile, amid the bloodshed, there is a growing realization in Washington that the current US strategy is failing and pressure is mounting for either a major change of course or a rapid pullout of the 138,000 US troops in Iraq. *AFP*

Lebanon gov't defiant as protesters keep up pressure

BEIRUT—TENS OF THOUSANDS of pro-Syrian protesters pressed on with a sit-in aimed at ousting Lebanon's Western-backed government on Sunday as the country's political crisis showed no sign of easing.

A Shiite Muslim protester was killed by gunmen in a Sunni district of Beirut as he was returning from the protests, and 12 others were wounded, security sources said.

The Shiite group Hezbollah and its allies in the opposition, including some Christians, held a third day of protests at a tent city in central Beirut, within earshot of the office-turned-residence of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.

"Our one and only demand is a government of national unity," senior pro-Syrian Christian opposition figure Suleiman Franjieh told a jubilant crowd massed at Beirut's Riad al-Solh square.

"We will stay in this square ... we will not leave until this illegal and unconstitutional government goes."

Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa arrived in Beirut to meet Lebanese officials, expressing concern and saying Arab countries could not afford to be bystanders in a crisis that developed after Hezbollah's summer war with Israel.

"The stability of Lebanon and moving towards a solution that would bring about a sure future for the country is one of our concerns," he said. "All of us are worried about the situation in Lebanon."

Although the dispute started out over political differences, it is moving closer to a sectarian crisis as tension between Sunnis and Shiites is high and there is ill feeling among Christians who are divided between the rival camps.

In a sign the protests could disintegrate into violence, a van carrying protesters was stoned as it drove through the Sunni QasQas neighbourhood of Beirut, security sources said.

The army broke up the crowd, but later on gunmen fired at a group who were returning from the protests, killing a young man—who was shot in the back with an automatic rifle—and wounding 12 others, security sources said.

The army deployed in the area and was investigating the shooting.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said in Jerusalem that he planned to deliver a strong message when he meets President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on Monday.

"Lebanon must have a chance to develop based on its own domestic forces and that can only happen when outside interference is ruled out," he said.

Government supporters, who held their own mass funeral procession for an assassinated anti-Syrian cabinet minister 12 days ago, stayed away from central Beirut, heeding calls by leaders to avoid street confrontations.

"We will be steadfast, peacefully and democratically. We are here and when they are convinced that there is no solution except through dialogue, then welcome," said anti-Syrian Druze leader Walid Jumblatt.

Despite the city center's paralyzed streets, a previously scheduled Beirut Marathon, held under the motto, "For the Love of Lebanon," went ahead with runners using suburban roads to skirt the demonstration.

The opposition led by Hezbollah, which is backed by Syria and Iran, has been demanding effective veto power in the government, whose majority comprises anti-Syrian politicians from Christian, Sunni Muslim and Druze parties.

But these politicians say the opposition only wants to weaken the government and derail a UN tribunal that would try suspects in the 2005 murder of ex-premier Rafik al-Hariri.

A preliminary UN inquiry has implicated Syrian and Lebanese security officials in the killing, which led to Syrian forces being forced to withdraw from Lebanon last year. *Reuters*

LEBANESE opposition protesters wave their national flag in downtown Beirut Dec. 3 as they camped on the government's doorstep for a third day to demand Prime Minister Fuad Siniora's resignation. AFP

Poisoning probe will broaden, UK says

LONDON—THE INVESTIGATION into the poisoning of Alexander V. Litvinenko, a former Russian KGB operative, will likely broaden in coming days, Britain's highest ranking law enforcement officer said Sunday, and media reports said British counterterrorism officers were planning to fly to Moscow to interview witnesses.

Litvinenko died Nov. 23 of radiation poisoning, and a radioactive isotope, polonium 210, was found in his urine. Since then, the investigation into his death has led the police along a trail of places where traces of radiation were found—including British Airways airplanes flying to and from Moscow and several locations in central and north London.

The reported plan to send officers to Moscow has deepened speculation that the British police are looking increasingly to Moscow for information about the origins of the poison and the identity of people who may have been in contact with Litvinenko before his death. Litvinenko had, since the late 1990s, become a staunch critic of the Russian president, Vladimir V. Putin.

The possible Russian connection has spilled into the realms of diplomacy. Senior Russian officials have complained to their British counterparts about the publication of a death-bed statement by Litvinenko accusing Putin of responsibility for the poisoning, according to a British official who spoke on condition of anonymity under civil service rules. Moscow has said it will cooperate in the British investigation. *NYT*

Despite being in front, Clinton dogged by 'electability' question

By Beth Fouhy

NEW YORK—WHILE HILLARY Rodham Clinton tops every national poll of likely 2008 Democratic presidential contenders, the New York senator is dogged by questions of "electability"—political code for whether she can win enough swing states to prevail in a general election.

It's a gauge typically applied to Democrats, as few question the electability of the Republican frontrunner, Arizona Senator John McCain. And for activists eager to recapture the White House after eight years of George W. Bush, electability remains a crucial yardstick by which Clinton, especially, seems to be measured.

Clinton began discussions last week with fellow New York lawmakers about her White House prospects and met Sunday with the state's Democratic governor-elect—all indications she is stepping up plans to join a growing field of potential contenders for 2008.

But some Democrats still believe the odds are against her actually being elected president.

"She's a senator, she'd be the first woman running, and she's Hillary Clinton," Dick Harpootlian, a former chair of the South Carolina Democratic Party not aligned with any presidential hopeful, said. "All of that is almost insurmountable for a general election."

He added: "There are people who would write a check and die for her, but there are plenty of others who wouldn't vote for her if she promised to eliminate the income tax and give free ice cream to everyone. People have made up their minds about her, and that doesn't give her much room to maneuver."

Clinton has not yet declared she plans to seek the presidency, and aides say the question of whether she can win tops the list of considerations. She's also said she is eager to return to the Senate, where, come January, she'll be a member of the new Democratic majority.

"Hillary Clinton has a good sense of self," said Chris Lehane, a longtime Democratic strategist who worked in the White House for President Bill Clinton. "I don't think she makes this race unless she thinks she has a pretty good chance of winning the whole thing."

On Sunday, Indiana Senator Evan Bayh said he would form a presidential exploratory committee to assess his chances, while Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack declared his candidacy last week. Other Democrats weighing a presidential run in 2008 include Illinois Senator Barack Obama; New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson; Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, the 2004 Democratic presidential nominee; and Kerry's 2004 running mate, former North Carolina Senator John Edwards.

Hillary Clinton enjoys several advantages. She has millions in the bank and a topflight team of advisers. She was handily reelected to a second term in the Senate, winning even the most conservative areas of her adopted home state of New York. And her husband is the Democratic Party's best campaign strategist and biggest fundraising draw.

Clinton's reputation remains deeply rooted in her polarizing eight years as first lady. Skeptics say she may still be too liberal for many voters, who recall her husband's scandal-plagued presidency and her own audacious effort to reform the nation's health care system. *AP*

Democratic presidential derby

A look at a selection of those jockeying for the White House in 2008:

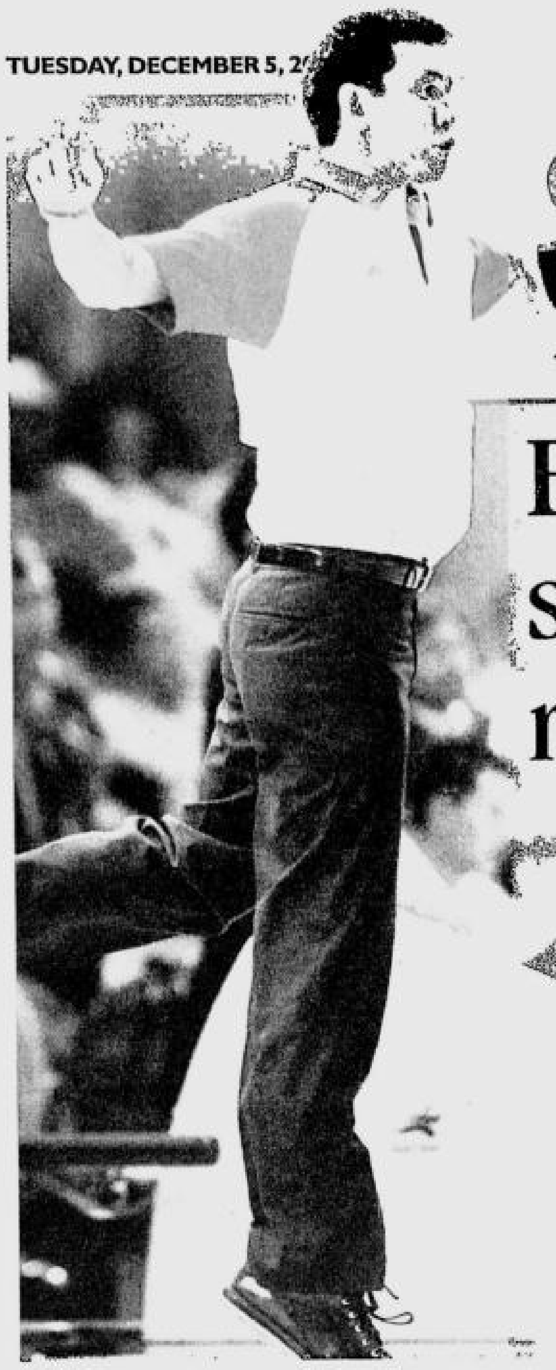
Evan Bayh
Indiana Senator
Announced Sunday he would set up an exploratory committee; expected to decide early next year.

Hillary Clinton
New York Senator
Top advisor says process has begun in gauging support among fellow New York lawmakers for a run.

John Edwards
Former N.C. Senator
The 2004 Democratic vice presidential nominee is considered part of the top tier of the presidential contenders.

Barack Obama
Illinois Senator
Among other potential rivals who are expected to decide within weeks whether to run.

Tom Vilsack
Iowa Governor
Launched a bid Nov. 9; he was the first to file but is trailing other candidates in polls.



PAENG Nepumuceno reacts after making a good shot. LYN RILLON

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

SPORTS

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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Embattled Filipino swimmers, batters resume hard work

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—WITH FOUR successive victories under its belt, the Philippine boxing team sends another fighter into the ring today in an Asian Games that has produced more heartaches than joy so far for other Filipino bidders.

Light welterweight Delfin Boholst, a relative newcomer in the RP squad, tries to make a big impression on his first big tournament when he goes up against the veteran Shin Myun-hoon of South Korea. The fight is one of the eight in the class where Thailand's flashy Olympic gold medalist Manus Boonjumnong looms large.

The bouts are scheduled to start late in the afternoon at the massive Aspire Hall, reputedly the world's biggest dome and the venue for simultaneous competitions in boxing, velodrome cycling, beach volleyball and gymnastics.

Filipino swimmers again try their luck at the Hamad Aquatic Center starting at mid-morning with Miguel Molina anchoring the men's 4 x 100-meter freetyle quartet that also includes Fil-Americans Daniel Coakley, James Walsh and Kendrick Uy.

Kendrick Uy competes in one of the four heats in the men's 50m butterfly starting at 10 a.m., Denjylie Cordero vies in the preliminaries of the 100m breaststroke, Ryan Arabejo joins the fray in the 100m freestyle and 100m backstroke, and Fil-American Erica Totten sets out in the 50m freestyle.

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China	31	13	8	52	India	0	3	2	5
Japan	7	10	10	27	Vietnam	0	2	2	4
South Korea	4	8	14	26	Singapore	0	2	2	4
Kazakhstan	4	3	5	12	Iran	0	2	0	2
Thailand	2	4	2	8	Taiwan	0	1	4	5
Kuwait	2	0	1	3	Uzbekistan	0	0	3	3
Mongolia	1	1	1	3	Lebanon	0	0	1	1
Indonesia	1	1	0	2	Myanmar	0	0	1	1
Hong Kong	1	0	3	4	Qatar	0	0	1	1
Malaysia	1	0	0	1	UAE	0	0	1	1
North Korea	0	3	4	7					

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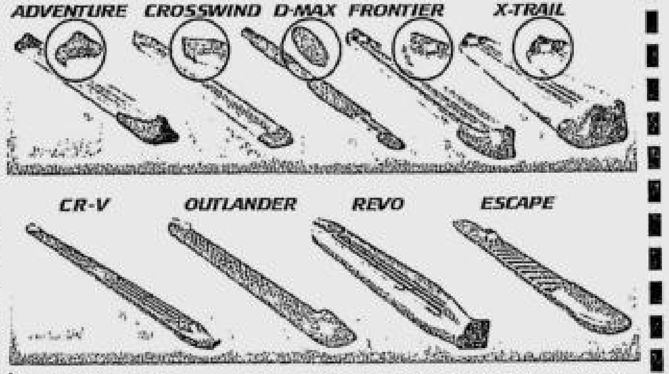

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Tee, Ongpauco running first; Castro shines

By Ted S. Melendres, *Sports Editor*

DOHA, QATAR—MARKWIN TEE AND TYRONE ONGPAUCO clung to first place after the first block of the men's doubles as Filipino bowlers managed to regain their focus after a dry, listless performance in the singles in the 15th Asian Games here yesterday.

The boxers kept their unbeaten run with light flyweight Godfrey Castro, the last-minute replacement for 2002 Asiad silver medalist Harry Tañamor, proving his worth with an impressive debut.

Castro won by RSC (referee-stopped-contest)-Outscored over Malaysian Azizi Zamsai Mohamad with 12 seconds left in the third round. He was leading 25-7 when the bout was stopped.

Tee, the Manila Southeast Asian Games masters gold medalist, rolled a block-best 1468 pinfalls and Ongpauco backed him up with 1334 for a 12-game total of 2812 as the RP pair took the lead over the joint second placers from United Arab Emirates and Qatar (2782).

The 22-year-old Tee started with 205 before rolling big games of 258-247-245-224 and 289 for an eye-popping 244.7 average.

Ongpauco shot a 249 in the second game and finished strongly with a 234. His other games were 204, 204, 242 and 201.

Reigning world champion Biboy Rivera, the best Filipino finisher in the men's singles at ninth place, teamed up with Chester King and were mired in ninth place with 2531.

The fancied tandem of former World Cup champions Paeng Nepomuceno and CJ Suarez were still playing in the second block at presstime.

The boxers made it four-of-four last Saturday with a second victory each by flyweight Violito Payla and featherweight Anthony Marcial even as the team of Jethro Dionisio, Eric Ang and Jaime Recio missed the bronze by seven birds in the men's team trap won by Kuwait.

Dionisio, who also wound up fourth in the individual category with 110 birds, towed the RP trio to the same finish on 309. The Kuwaitis beat an Indian team backstopped by world champion Manavjit Singh Sandhu, 327-323 for the gold medal, with Lebanon thwarting an RP medal finish with 316.

Carolino Gonzales shot 566 for 29th place in the 10-meter air pistol qualification and failed to advance to the medal round. The 49-year-old father of three from Cavite was 22 points off the the leading pace.

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006

National Open champion Darwin Laylo stunned Grandmaster Talib Moosa Ibrahim of UAE in the seventh round of the men's Rapid Swiss and stayed within striking distance of co-leaders GM Bu Xiangxi of China and GM Murtas Kazhgaleyev.

The 20th ranked Laylo halved the point with Iranian GM Elshan Moradiabadi and Turkmenistan's Meylis Annaberdiyev before trouncing Moosa to pool 4.5 points, part of an eight-man logjam for third place, 1.5 off the frontrunners.

GM-candidate Ronald Dableo bowed to No.2 seed Indian GM Harikrishna Pentala in the fifth round, bounced back with a victory over Jordan's Ahmad Samhouri before holding Indonesian GM Susano Megaranto to a draw. Dableo stood half a point behind Laylo with 4.0 points.

In women's play, 14-year-old Jodera Docena beat Aysha Mutaywea of Bahrain, drew with Mongolian Woman GM Munguntuul Batkyuhag and then lost to Woman IM Olga Sabirova of Uzbekistan to pool 3.5 points, 2.5 off leader full-pledge GM Humpy Koneru of India.

Filipino medal hopes also rose in the rowing competition in Doha's windswept West Bay Lagoon as the veteran pair of Benjamin Tolentino and Jose Rodriguez ruled their heat in the 1,000-meter men's double sculls.

Tolentino, a double gold medallist in last year's SEA Games, and Rodriguez clocked three minutes and 58.27 seconds in beating the pair from fellow qualifier Hong Kong (3:59.39) as well as the Indians and North Korea.

Compatriots Alvin Amposta and Nilo Cordova (4:42.87) likewise made it to the event's next round with a runner-up finish to the Japanese pair of Takahiro Suda and Hideki Omoto (4:19.67).

Cordova later wound up second to Uzbekistan's Artyon Kudryashov (4:29.87) in the men's lightweight single sculls and advanced to the next round with a time of 4:43.08. Rodriguez also gained the next round of the men's single sculls after settling for second place behind Kazakhstan's Mikhail Garnik in Heat 2. The Filipino timed 4:12.73 to the Kazakh's 4:10.18.

But the judokas suffered a beating and no one, not even the multititled John Baylon, advanced to the medal round.

The 42-year-old Baylon lost by ippon in four minutes and six seconds to Kazakhstan's Almas Atayev in the quarterfinals of the—81 kg category but not before whipping Pakistan's Saeed Akhtar (4:18) and Qatar's Waleed Hanfi (1:58), also by ippon.

RP DAILY SKED—Dec. 5

Boxing *(Aspire Hall)*—2 p.m.—Men's light welterweight (Delfin Boholst).

Baseball *(Al-Ryaan)*—1:30 p.m.—RP vs Chinese Taipei

Soft Tennis *(Khalifa)*—9 a.m.—Women's singles (Petrona Bantay, Belen Dante); 10 a.m.—Men's singles (Michael John Enriquez, Orlando Silvoza)

Swimming *(Hamad Aquatic Center)*—10 a.m (heats), 6 p.m (finals)—Men's 50-meter butterfly (James Walsh, Ernest Dee); Women's 100-meter breastroke (Denjylie Cordero); Men's 400-meter freestyle (Ryan Arabejo); Women's 50-meter freestyle (Erica Totten); Men's 100-meter backstroke (Ryan Arabejo); Men's 4 x 100-meter free-style (Uy, Coakley, Walsh, Molina)

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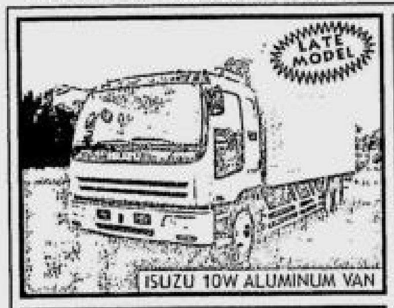

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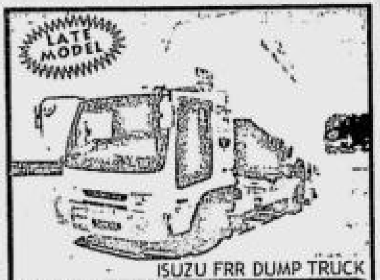

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Veteran rowing tandem reaches second round

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—FOR ROWERS OF the highest caliber, age does not matter. Look at Steve Redgrave, the 44-year-old British rowing hero who has bagged six gold medals in as many Olympics.

Veterans Benjamin Tolentino Jr. and Jose Rodriguez, for too long the solid posts of Philippine rowing, proved they were not yesterday's roses again on Sunday afternoon when they ruled their heat of the men's doubles sculls in the 15th Asian Games here.

On the way to the next round, the Filipinos showed up much younger pairs from fellow qualifier Hong Kong as well as India and North Korea. A lot of water has passed under the bridge for both the 33-year-old Tolentino and Rodriguez, 35, since capturing three gold medals between them in last year's Southeast Asian Games in Manila.

"We have matured a lot, but we've also gained in experience," Tolentino, a father of two from Las Piñas and grandson of former basketball Olympian Mariano Tolentino, said in Filipino.

An Indian false start in the heaving course initially ruffled Rodriguez who complained of having to paddle back to the starting line again for the re-start. "We didn't see the red flags," said the Navy enlisted man from Caloocan City. "We got tired because we were already 600 meters into the race when the false start was announced."

Tolentino, one of the few Filipino multiple gold medalists in the SEA Games with victories in the lightweight singles and doubles sculls, said they were lucky to pull it off despite the bad weather.

"We just stuck to our race plan and gave it our final burst of energy in the end," he said. "The weather condition was bad and we couldn't get good rhythm. Rowing in salt water is harder, it's too light, unlike in fresh water."

The Filipinos clocked 3 minutes and 58.27 seconds and beat the Hong Kong pair of Lok Kwan-hoi, 20, and Leung Chun-shek by 1.2 seconds. The Indians were third in 4:02.42. followed by the North Koreans in 4:16.56.

"We would like the compete against China or Japan, they are the teams to beat, being world-class rowing nations," said Rodriguez.

Laylo, Dableo in running for chess medals

DOHA, QATAR—FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL Masters Darwin Laylo and Ronald Dableo put up a brave stand against higher-rated rivals and stayed in contention for a medal after seven rounds in the men's and women's individual rapid chess competition of the 15th Asian Games.

A few hours after drawing with top seed GM Krishnan Sasikiran (Elo 2675) of India in the fourth round, Laylo continued his remarkable performance by beating GM Taleb Moussa of the United Arab Emirates to climb into a tie for fifth to 11th places with 4.5 points. Laylo, who also halved the point with two highly ranked players—Elshan Moradiabadi (Elo 2539) of Iran and GM Meilis Annaberdyev (Elo 2457) of Turkmenistan in the fifth and sixth rounds, has two wins and five draws.

The 26-year-old campaigner from Lipa City, who earned his IM title in San Marino, Italy, early this year, is one and a half points behind fourth seed GM Bu Xiangzhi (Elo 2671) of China and No. 6 GM Murtas Kazhgaleyev (Elo 2609) of Kazakhstan.

Dableo, who stunned Indonesian GM Utut Adianto in the fourth round, won over A. Samhoyri of Jordan in the sixth round and then drew with GM Susanto Megaranto of Indonesia in the seventh round to remain in contention with four points.

A mainstay of Philippine Air Force, Dableo now has three wins, two draws and two losses to Bu in the third round and to second seed GM Pentala Harikrishna (Elo 2674) of India in the fifth round.

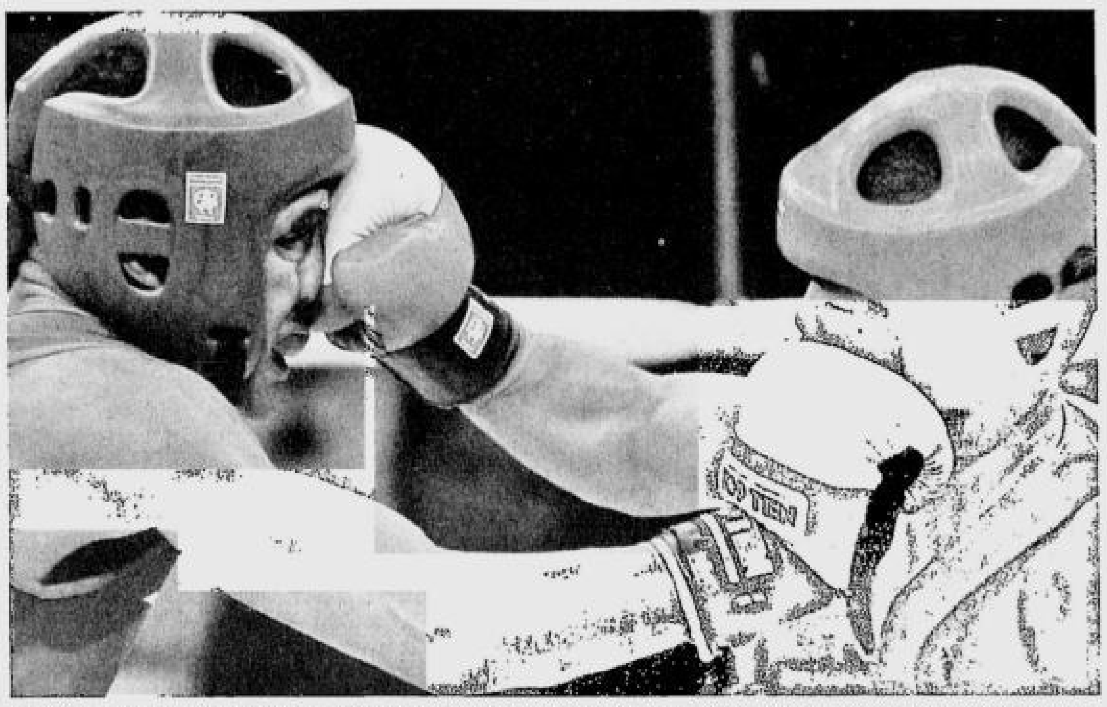
The Philippine's lone entry in the women's division—Jedara Docena—was not as fortunate.

The 14-year-old pride Docena bowed to WIM O. Sabirova of Uzbekistan in their seventh-round encounter to remain with 3.5 points out of a possible seven.

Docena, who earned the right to represent the country by topping the national elimination held at the SM Mall of Asia last September, earlier won her fourth-round assignment against Mona Lisha Khamboo of Nepal and drew her next two matches. In the sixth round late Sunday, she split the point with fourth seed WGM Bahtuyag Mongontuul of Mongolia.

"I'm satisfied with the performances of our players so far. They are doing their best to keep Filipino pride alive," said National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP) president and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, who is hoping that Laylo and Dableo both achieve their third and last GM norm.

Added NCFP secretary general and Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham Tolentino: "With 17 GMs entered here in Doha, including former world champion seed Rustam Kasimdzhanov of Uzbekistan, the Filipinos' performances are already satisfactory."



FILIPINO Anthony Marcial (right) flattens the nose of Iraq's Suraka Mahdi during the men's boxing competition 57kg preliminary bout at the Aspire building in Doha, Qatar. LYN RILLON

Payla, Marcial win anew, near bronze

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—ONE MORE victory each and flyweight Violito Payla and featherweight Anthony Marcial are assured of at least a bronze medal.

Fresh off their second successive wins in their respective divisions Sunday night, Payla and Marcial not only kept the Philippines unscathed in the boxing competitions of the 15th Asian Games here, they also sent shivers in the spines of their quarterfinal foes.

Between the two, Marcial was the fiercer pug in the lion's den Sunday.

The 20-year-old fighter from Zamboanga City pummeled Iraq's Suraka Mahdi to submission, winning via RSC-O (referee stopped contest-outscored) in one minute and 57 seconds of the second round of their bout at the massive Aspire Hall here.

Marcial won the first round at 9-2 and was leading at 15-2 when the bout was stopped.

"I'm slowly regaining my stamina," Marcial said in Filipino. "Although I won, I have not really adjusted to Qatar time (Doha time is five hours behind Manila's). We arrived here just five days ago."

The win set up Marcial against the quick-moving but slow-punching Galib Jafarov of Kazakhstan in Thursday's quarterfinals. Jafarov, 28, took all but one round in outpointing Sri Lanka's Kamal Sameera, 14-6.

Payla was just too sleek and too experienced for Vietnam's Tan Quoc Viet, who inexplicably let his guard down from the second round after barely losing the first, 7-6.

The 26-year-old from Cagayan de Oro cornered the next three rounds, 10-3, 10-1, 8-1, to easily put the match away, 35-11.

"I studied my opponent first," Payla explained in Filipino. "When that was done, I poured it all and made sure I did my homework."

Payla will next clash with India's Jitender Kumar Thursday for a shot at the bronze medal. The relatively inexperienced 18-year-old Kumar outpointed Pakistan's Nauman Karim in a ho-hum of a fight, 14-6.

A win over Kumar will hopefully bring the veteran internationalist Payla closer to a gold medal match against either Somjit Jongjohor of Thailand or Lee Ok-sung of South Korea, the prohibitive favorites in the flyweight class.

Somjit sneaked into the quarterfinals with a hard-earned 25-20 decision of Tajikistan's Anvar Yasunov while the wily, quick-punching Lee overpowered Kyrgyzstan's Avazbek Abdullaev, 24-18, in a thoroughly entertaining clash.

Three more Filipinos get going Monday—light flyweight Godfrey Castro, bantamweight Joan Tipon and lightweight Genebert Basadre.

Chinese pair too much for Diane, Heidi

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—SOMETHING'S GOT TO give for the Philippines' beach volleyball darlings.

Pitted against the taller world No. 3 Chinese pair, Diane Pascua and Heidi Ilustre looked a bit out of sync. And it showed in the scores as the Fil-Americans absorbed a 15-21, 18-21 defeat, their first in the double-elimination format of the 14-tandem competition at the sprawling Sport City here.

"The only team you want to take down is China," said Pascua, the 5-foot-9 stunner from Mountain View, California. "It's a pity we couldn't do it for the fans this time."

Goaded on by a small but boisterous Filipino crowd on Saturday, Pascua and Ilustre debuted with aplomb when they nipped a favored Kazakh pair, 21-16, 11-21, 17-15, to set up the match with China's Xu Chen and Zhang Xi.

The Chinese stood at match point when the never-say-die Filipinos, bronze medalists in last year's Southeast Asian Games in Bacolod, racked up three straight points to move closer to a deciding set.

"I was thinking, 'Just make your serve, just make your serve,' but it was not meant to be," said the 29-year-old Ilustre after the well-applauded match. "The Chinese were just awesome and they were not easily rattled."

The Filipinos need to win their next game against a still undetermined tandem to stay alive in the competition.

Pascua said the game against the Chinese proved they have surmounted games' jitters.

"It was a little smoother than our first game against Kazakhstan, it was more consistent," she said. "It was good having first-game nerves out of the way. That helped us focus more on our game."

Embattled...

From page A21

"The Chinese and the Japanese are simply too strong for the rest of the field," Akiko Thomson, secretary general of the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association, was quoted as saying in the Games' Daily Report.

But Thomson, an Asian Games bronze medalist during her heydays, said the RP tankers had trained well and could still spring a surprise.

At the Al-Rayyan Sports Club out in the desert north of here, the embattled Filipino batters resume their march to Calvary early in the afternoon against gold-medal favorite and still unbeaten Chinese-Taipei.

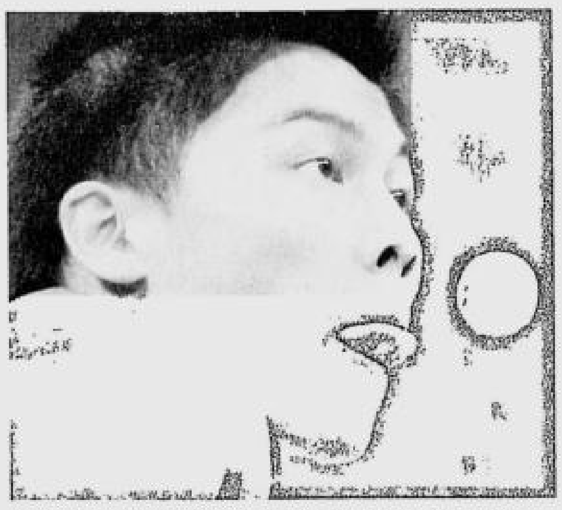
Saddled by poor pitching and hitting, the Filipinos lost their first three games in lopsided fashion. They bowed to the Japanese, 17-2, the Chinese, 15-4, and the South Koreans, 17-1, in that order.

"They knew they were well beaten but [coach Ely] Baradas still had the nerve to tell the media, 'It was better to play and lose than to not play at all,'" said Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, the president of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

"That was the worst statement I've heard from a coach. They shouldn't be here if they don't have the will to win."

The only ball squad in the RP contingent, the batters made it to Doha in the nick of time after national baseball chief Hector Navasero dug deep in his own pocket and received a promise of funding support from Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez.

After a fruitless campaign in the team competitions, the soft tennis squads also resume action at the Khalifa Tennis Complex with Petrona Bantay and Belen Dante competing in the women's singles and John Enriquez and Orlando Silvoza taking part in men's play.



LICKING GOOD: China's Chen Qi competes against South Korea during the table tennis men's team final at the Al-Arabi Sports Club. AFP

Taiwan batters hold off China

DOHA, QATAR—TAIWAN STAYED on track for a gold medal-deciding game against Japan in Asian Games baseball with a 4-2 win Monday over China.

Early on the third full day of competition in the Asian regional sports showcase, third baseman Chang Tai-shan and designated hitter Chen Chin-feng hit solo home runs to lead Taiwan to victory.

China, which lost 16-0 to Japan on Sunday, threatened in the eighth, putting men on first and second with no out. But reliever Keng Po-hsuan came in to get three straight outs and the save for Taiwan.

Japan, the World Baseball Classic champion, and Taiwan meet Thursday in the final round-robin game in the tournament, with the winner to take gold.

"We're relaxed now and not thinking about the game," Keng said of the gold-medal matchup. "But we're good enough to win it all."

In early gold medals Monday, Thailand broke up domination by Chinese and Kazakhstan shooters to win the women's team gold in the 50-meter rifle prone position. China's Xu Xuan won the women's 10-meter target and Kazakhstan's Olga Dovgun took the women's 50-meter prone gold.

In tenpin bowling, Indonesia's Ryan Lalisang came agonizingly close to a perfect game while winning the gold in men's singles. He had a 299 in his second game—just one pin away from a perfect 300—en route to breaking records for individual game and six-game totals at the Asian Games.

Lalisang, who had only a paltry 200 in his first game, credited a coaching tip with the near-perfect effort in the second of his six-game series. *AP*

Judokas first to leave for RP tomorrow

By Marc Anthony Reyes

EVEN BEFORE THE OTHERS could leave for Qatar, some of the Asian Games athletes would already be back in the country.

At least 10 athletes and coaches in judo will be among the first arrivals by midday tomorrow based on a schedule released by the Asiad secretariat at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The four-day judo competition ends today.

The 11-man karatedo delegation, led by three-time Southeast Asian Games champion Gretchen Malalad, will be leaving for Doha Dec. 9 or two days after the judokas have arrived.

Athletes from weightlifting, cycling and gymnastics will be coming home on Dec. 7 to make way for the arrival of other Filipino athletes who will occupy their old rooms in the 25 apartments reserved for the Philippines inside the Athletes Village.

Officials said the peak of occupancy will be on Dec. 8 when approximately 200 athletes will be in the Village.

A 46-man delegation going home on Dec. 8 will be made up of baseball, table tennis, rowing and aquatics bets while 34 more athletes and officials from shooting, soft tennis, triathlon and youth campers will be planing in the next day.

Seven delegates from badminton and body building are set to arrive Dec. 10, followed by 31 from bowling and taekwondo Dec. 11. Twenty-nine from volleyball, billiards and golf are expected the next day while 15 athletes and officials from track and field fly home Dec. 13.

Some 49 more are headed home Dec. 14 from boxing, sepak takraw, sailing, wrestling and archery.

Karatedo will be among those going home last on the closing day on Dec. 15, while the chief of mission staff will be homeward bound on Dec. 17.

HEADLESS MARVEL: Chinese gymnast Zhou Zhhuoru performs her golden floor routine during the Artistic Gymnastics competition. AFP

Dandan leads ITF Week 2 field today

By Jasmine W. Payo

EIGHT PHILIPPINE BETS WILL SEE ACtion in the boys' singles main draw at the Phinma-International Tennis Federation (ITF) Juniors Championships Week 2 starting at 9 a.m. today at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

First leg champion Kyle Joshua Dandan and RP Junior Davis Cuppers Ralph Kevin Barte and Pablo Olivarez II will spearhead the local campaign.

Completing the local roster are Joshua Tan Ho, Mark Balce and Russell Arcilla Jr., Asia's top 14-under player Francis Casey Alcantara and Jose Lorenzo Opulencia.

Briton Matthew Short, Russian Artem Ilyshin, Ukrainian Dimitri Kovalyov and Korean Seol Jae-Min also advanced to the main draw.

Short outlasted Japanese Hiroki Tsunematsu, 7-6 (4), 6-3, while Ilyshin triumphed over Japanese Ryuji Hirooka, 6-1, 7-5.

Pulling off convincing victories were Kovalyov over Korean Jeong Yeon-Woo, 6-2, 6-2, and Jae-Min versus Filipino Akio Sy, 6-2, 6-2.

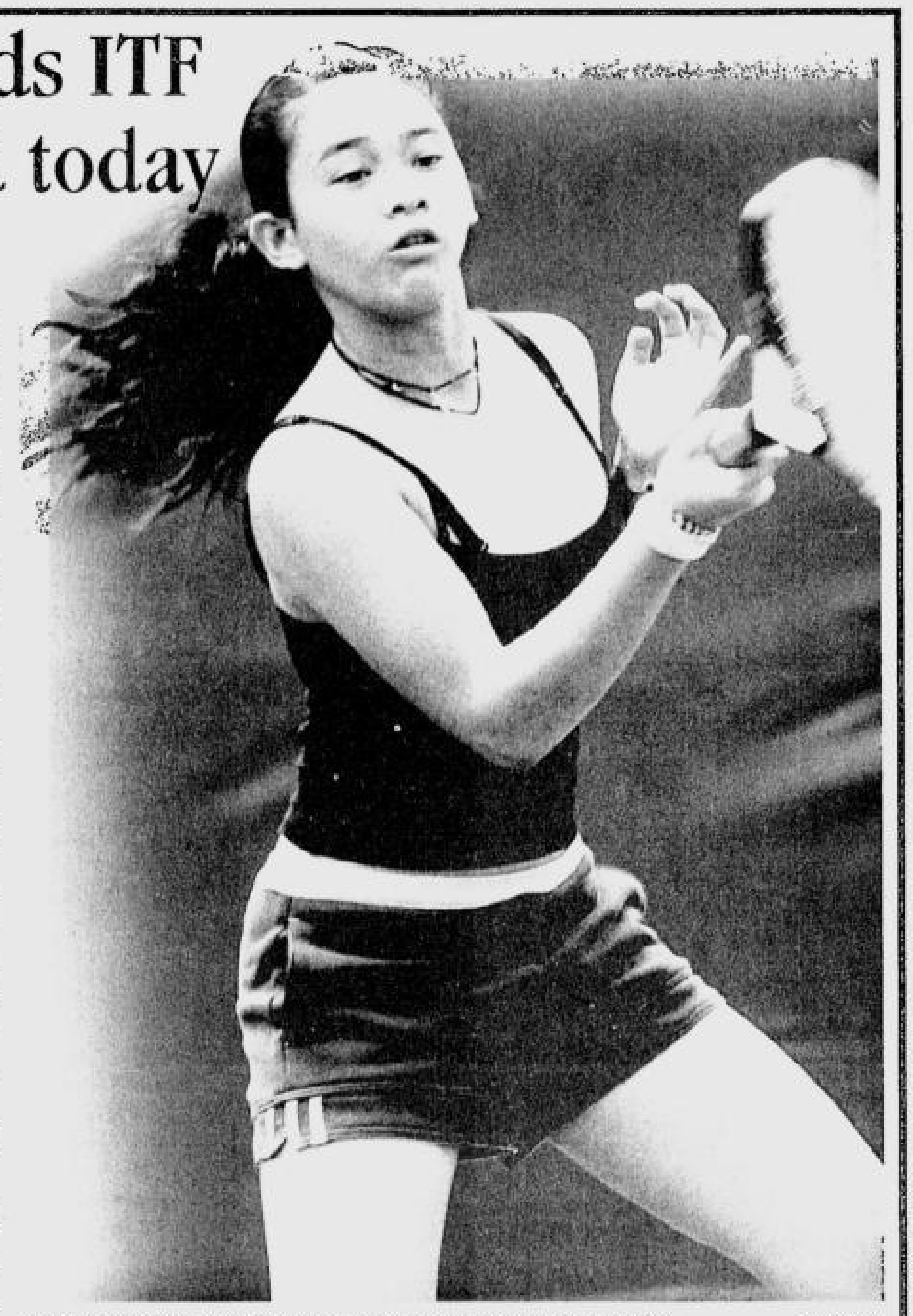
The Japanese and Austrian netters dominated the qualifying matches in the girls' division yesterday to reach the main draw.

Austrian Stephanie Hirsch easily disposed of Filipino Justine Marie Contemprato, 6-0, 6-2, while compatriot Marie Louis Schutz outclassed Korean Jeon Da-Won, 6-2, 6-0.

Japanese Riko Fujioka thwarted German Maribelle Siegfried, 6-3, 6-2.

Miki Edagawa made it a double Japanese victory with a 6-2, 6-1 decision over Malaysian Dorothy Chong.

Local bets Jessica Marie Agra, Trudy Gine Amoranto, Melissa Rose Orteza, Zoleta siblings Noelle Nikki and Noelle Conchita, Maja Assad, Liz Magaway and Barcelona-based Fil-American Nivea Bezich will head the campaign in the girls' division.



JUSTINE Contemprato: Getting a dose of international competition. ERIK ARAZAS

H. Centre targets 3rd win in row

JC INTAL HOPES TO FOLLOW UP ON HIS STIRRING DEBUT AS THE Harbour Centre Port Masters shoot for their third straight win against the Toyota Otis Sparks in the PBL Silver Cup at the Letran Gym.

"He's a complete package," said Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent of his new star recruit. "But for him to become the team leader, he has to show it. He has to get the respect of his teammates."

The Port Masters (2-1) are slightly favored over the 1-2 Sparks in their 4 p.m. clash.

Mail and More's brawny center JR Quiñahan will also try to flash his old form as the Comets battle the Magnolia Spinners at 2 p.m.

Making up for recent mediocre performances, Quiñahan delivered 16 points, nine boards, four assists and two blocks in the Comets' upset win versus the second-running Sista Super Sealers, 65-58, last Saturday.

But Quiñahan will be up against Nigerian behemoth Sam Ekwe, who will try to lead Magnolia to its second straight win.

"Every team is intimidated with Ekwe," said Comets coach Lawrence Chongson. "San Beda's system is also strong."

The Spinners, boosted by the core of NCAA champion San Beda Lions, halted a two-game skid by walloping the Kettle Korn-UST Tigers, 97-74.

Magnolia coach Koy Banal also expects consistent performances from top collegiate players Yousif Aljamal, Jonas Villanueva, Bonbon Custodio and Jeff Chan.

Although the Port Masters are coming off an 11-day break, Gallent thinks his wards are far from rusty.

In their last outing, the Port Masters got good numbers from Intal, Chico Lanete and Reed Juntilla to cruise to an 85-66 rout over the Tigers.

Speedy guards Marvin Cruz and JP Alcaraz, meanwhile, will be the key weapons in the Sparks' charge. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Bautista heads home

BAUTISTA

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA—A victorious Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista and his team are scheduled to fly to the Philippines today following his fourth-round technical knockout win over Brazil's Giovanni Andrade last Saturday in Tampa, Florida.

"I am happy I will be home finally. I terribly miss my family already," Bautista said in Cebuano yesterday before boarding a Delta Airlines from Tampa, Florida, bound for Los Angeles.

Among those who joined Bautista in the trip was trainer Freddie Roach, who said Bautista impressed him with his showing against Andrade.

Bautista will be coming home accompanied by his Filipino promoter Sammy Gello-ani and trainer Edito Villamor via Guam. He is expected to arrive early Wednesday.

Bautista's manager Antonio L. Aldeguer is flying to Manila to meet his fighter, along with Tagbilaran City Mayor Dan Neri Lim. Boom Boom is set to leave for Cebu 9:30 a.m. Bautista's win sets him up for a bout with WBO super bantam king Daniel Ponce De Leon on Feb. 25 either in Cebu or Manila. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

Hickam, Ultraflite Fil B co-leaders

BAGUIO CITY—HICKAM MAMALA BAY, Ultraflite and the Fil Golfers of Honolulu grabbed the limelight at the start of the 57th Fil-Am Golf Invitational at the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay Golf Club.

Hickam and Ultraflite posted identical 110 points at the par 61 John Hay layout to tie for the Fil Division Flight B lead while the Fil Golfers shot 83 at the par 61 BCC course to pace the Am Division Flight B.

Rusty Barfield had 31 points under the Stableford scoring system to pace Hickam which also drew a 28 from Jude Sorg, a 26 from Craig Penman and a 25 from Darren Smith.

August Cruz starred for Ultraflite with 30. Rey Talatala had 29, Roger Crespo 27 and Edgar Patalindagat 24. Both teams placed second in the division last year.

Baguio-City of Pines II shot 105 to place third in Fil Flight B, followed by AAV-Robros-Venturesink 104, Dugong Bughaw 103, Villa Cacho 98, the Eagle Club 95 and Silicon Golfers Link and Pines Golf Club of California 93 each.

Team Brassie of Nueva Ecija amassed 80 points to trail Fil Golfers of Honolulu just by three.

Syndicate, which was promoted after topping Flight C last year, shot 79 to lead the next group. Also in that level were Dugong Bughaw, Watercraft Ventures Corp. and Villa Cacho.

The big guns headed by Nike Golf Pacsports, Manila Southwoods, Mizuno and Del Monte start their campaigns in the major divisions on Wednesday.

Nike Golf Pacsports is again heavily favored to sweep the Fil and Am division championships.

SPORTSWATCH

Ilagan, Abiera, Agustin prevail

CARMONA, CAVITE—MARTY ILAGAN, LITO ABIERA AND FERDIE AGUSTIN pooled a 10-under net 62 under the three-man team modified scramble to eke out a pulsating victory in Group I division of the recent Southwoods Golf and Country Club monthly tournament. The triumvirate had to rely on precise putting in the last few holes to beat the first runner-up trio of Theody Pascual, Benjie Sarmiento and Edmund Yee which shot a net 63. Richie Santos, Jose Roy and Danny Samaniego also shot a 63 but emerged second runner-up because of a higher handicap. The Group II crown went to Dennis Gamab, Tony de Leon and Edwin Ermita after carding a 10-under 62. At second with 64 were Felix Cortez, Lita Sumalon and Arnold Sumalon followed by the 65 of Mar Badillo, Robert Agojo and Jun de Grano. Apolinario Reyes, Rolly Dizon and wife Arlette Dizon shot a six-under 66 en route to the Group 3 championship. Irene Siopongco, Mike Hodgkinson and Cecile Hodgkinson fired a 67 and finished in second spot.

Roligon 5-cocker submission of entries

OFFICIAL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED ON WEDNESDAY FROM 9 A.M. TO 9 p.m. in connection with Roligon Mega Cockpit's Apordabol Incredibol 5-cock derby. To be hosted by Rolly Ligon, the four-day spectacle will start on Thursday featuring more than 80 fights in the elimination round. Two more qualifying rounds are lined up on Dec. 9 and 11. The championship round unwraps on Dec. 13. A brand-new, seven-seater Toyota Avanza will be given to the fastest win champion as bonus. The derby entry fee is P6,600 and minimum bet is P5,500. For details, call 851-2275; 833-1638 and 852-9812.

75 fights in Sta. Ana cockfest today

AROUND 75 FIGHTS WILL BE STAGED TODAY AS BIG-TIME COCKERS COLLIDE at Sta. Ana cockpit (A.P. Reyes Avenue, Makati City) via the Singkamas Pride 3-cock derby beginning at 5 p.m. Participants include Boy Javier, host Pete Ison, Emil Chua, Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud, Leo Magpantay, William Co, Butchoy Olano, Boy Corcuera, Wilmer Ting, Boy Javier, Jun Pascual, Super Pacman entry, Louie Cua, Boy de Roca, Cito Manansala and Lito Roque. A guaranteed prize of P150, 000 is at stake for an entry fee of P5,500. Meanwhile, Sta. Ana Cockpit's Fastest Win One–Cock Ulutan resumes on Dec. 9, said pit manager Edwin Vittali. For inquiries, call 898-3474 and 898-3475.

Fistorama leaves pro boxing

FISTORAMA BIDS GOODBYE TO PROFESSIONAL BOXING AS IT AIRS ITS LAST fights at 3 p.m. this afternoon. The featured bouts are two six-rounders between featherweights Aden Zarco and Joan de Guia and bantamweights Arnel Layson and Mervin Batolina. Next week, Fistorama will feature exciting amateur fights as producer/promoter Edgardo Boy Cantada will stage the 1st Cantada Open Amateur Boxing Championships at the Cantada Sports Center on Dec. 7-9. Participants will come from Gov. Oscar Moreno's Misamis Oriental, Gov. Manny Pinol's Northern Cotabato, Mandaluyong Boxing Club, Army, Navy and Air Force. Golf Power Plus' airs at 4 p.m. featuring the semifinal match between College of St. Benilde Team 1 and PATTS in the PCSO Women's Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge.

RACING TIPS
BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Prospector's Cat (11), Fordest time (8), Air D'Truth (3), Market Leader (10), Urband Legend (5), Rainbow Ridge (1)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—House of Riches (4), Lord Elgene (5), Double Your Bet/Honey Ur Mine (2), Mr. Bonjing (1)
Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Super Jambol (3), Amazing Pace (4), Kailey's Tiara (6), Diamond Luster (2)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Silver Place/Take Ten (5), Uncle (7), Miss Victory (8), Road Runner (9), Fernan Ikaw Pa Rin (3)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Sandok (1), Reign of Fire (2), Loaded (7), Last Dance (8)
Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Daddy's Girl (6), Lakambini (7), Bubble Gum (9), Sea of Galilee (1), Secret Quest (8)
Race 7—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Key Element (2), Tellmemolies (7), Lord Brian (10), Victory Ranger/Boss Lady (3), D As In Dixie (8), Lucky Punch (5)
Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Verdadera (10), Royal Academy (9), Magic Key (3), Golden Lass (3), Sun Chaser (2)
Race 9—(Playing Cool (5), Awesome Power (10), Gutsy (2), Lord of the Ring (4), Detective Daryll (8), Prickly Heat (11)

Eala asks 2 coaches to explain near fight

By Musong R. Castillo

RED BULL COACH Yeng Guiao and Talk 'N Text team manager Frankie Lim have been summoned to appear before PBA Commissioner Noli Eala today to explain why they lost their cool and almost came to blows in an out-of-town game last Thursday.

Lim appears first at 2 p.m. followed by Guiao 30 minutes later.

Red Bull won that Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup game pulling away, 104-76, and the confrontation happened at the height of a fiery Barako surge. They challenged each other to a fistfight at halfcourt in full view of Eala and the public.

Both personalities were tossed out of the playing court and could face suspensions in their next respective outings though league rules don't necessarily stipulate an automatic suspension on thrown out officials.

The Barako clash with the Welcoat Dragons at the resumption of the eliminations tomorrow.

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CIVIC 1.8V MT	P772,000	P115,800	P15,230	P386,000	P8,959
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HONDA

SAFIN

Russia claims crown

MOSCOW—ADMITTING he was downright scared, Marat Safin composed himself and won the Davis Cup title for Russia.

The two-time Grand Slam champion had 16 aces in beating Jose Acasuso 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (5) on Sunday in the fifth and deciding match, giving Russia a 3-2 decision over Argentina for its second Davis Cup crown.

Safin lost his opening singles match Friday, blaming the indoor carpet at Olympic Stadium. But neither the surface nor lingering knee injuries stopped him this time.

David Nalbandian, who beat Safin on Friday, won the opening reverse singles match Sunday to make it 2-2. The eighth-ranked Argentine downed Nikolay Davydenko 6-2, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 to put Safin on the spot.

This was the first time Russia won the Davis Cup at home. Sweden topped the host Russians in the 1994 final, and the United States beat them a year later. Russia won its only previous title four years ago in France.

AP

Bobcats repulse Pistons

NEW YORK—RESERVES Sean May and Matt Carroll combined for 33 points off the bench as the Charlotte Bobcats ended the Detroit Pistons' eight-game winning streak with a 97-89 win in Charlotte on Sunday.

May had 17 points and Carroll added 16 for the Bobcats, as their bench players out-scored the Detroit reserves 46-14 to snap a two-game losing streak as Charlotte continued its success against elite NBA teams.

Despite a 5-12 overall record, the Bobcats have beaten San Antonio, Cleveland and now Detroit this season, handing the Pistons their first loss since Nov. 15.

Detroit (11-6) shot just 41 percent from the field while the Bobcats shot 49 percent, including 6-for-13 from three-point range, with May making seven of the 10 shots he attempted.

Emeka Okafor led the Bobcats in scoring with 18 points and had eight rebounds as Charlotte came back after trailing by one point at the half.

Raymond Felton chipped in 15 points for the Bobcats.

Reuters

Complete results: Minnesota 95, Philadelphia 84; Charlotte 97, Detroit 89; Atlanta 107, Portland 96; LA Clippers 116, Orlando 91

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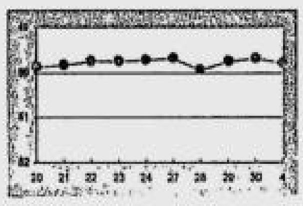


DECEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 49.77 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 4, 2006

Shares close slightly up

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed 0.25 percent higher, with gains in property and banking stocks partly offset by losses in index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone, dealers said.

They said broader trading was listless.

The composite index added 6.84 points to

SHARES/ B2

Neda: Economy still on growth track

RP within sight of target despite calamities

By Michelle V. Remo

"REMING" MAY HAVE BEEN A CALAMITY THAT took on the dimensions of a national tragedy, but the devastation it brought on the economy may not be enough to prevent the country from meeting this year's growth target of at least 5.5 percent, the National Economic and Development Authority said.

"I don't want to downplay (the destruction caused by the typhoon), but its effect on economic growth in the fourth quarter would not be much," Neda Director General Romulo Neri told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

According to government estimates, damage to crops and fisheries reached over P800 million as of the weekend *(See related story below)*.

The Agriculture sector accounts for a fifth of the Philippine economy's gross domestic product. GDP, the most common tool to measure an economy's performance, is the total value of goods and services produced within an economy in a given period.

But Neri said the effects of the typhoon on the economy as a whole were insignificant, and would not even reach 50 basis points of GDP growth.

He noted that Typhoon "Milenyo," which hit the country late September, did not have much adverse impact on GDP growth in the third quarter.

Neri said the economic drag during the period was caused largely by restrained government spending, a result of the failure of Congress to pass the proposed national budget of P1.053 trillion for 2006. The failure to pass the proposed budget for this year forced government to operate on last year's budget, which was about P100 billion less.

The government has set a GDP growth target of between 5.5 and 6.1 percent for this year. However, confidence on the economy's ability to meet the goal was

NEDA/ B2

NTC greenlights PLDT, Globe promo plans

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE TWO LARGEST TELECOM COMPANIES IN the country have secured the National Telecommunications Commission's (NTC) approval to launch new promos starting this month.

According to the NTC, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Globe Telecom

NTC/ B2

DA estimates typhoon losses to reach P830M

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE LOSSES FROM THE RECENT typhoon that devastated agricultural areas in 13 provinces are estimated to have reached P830 million, according to the Department of Agriculture.

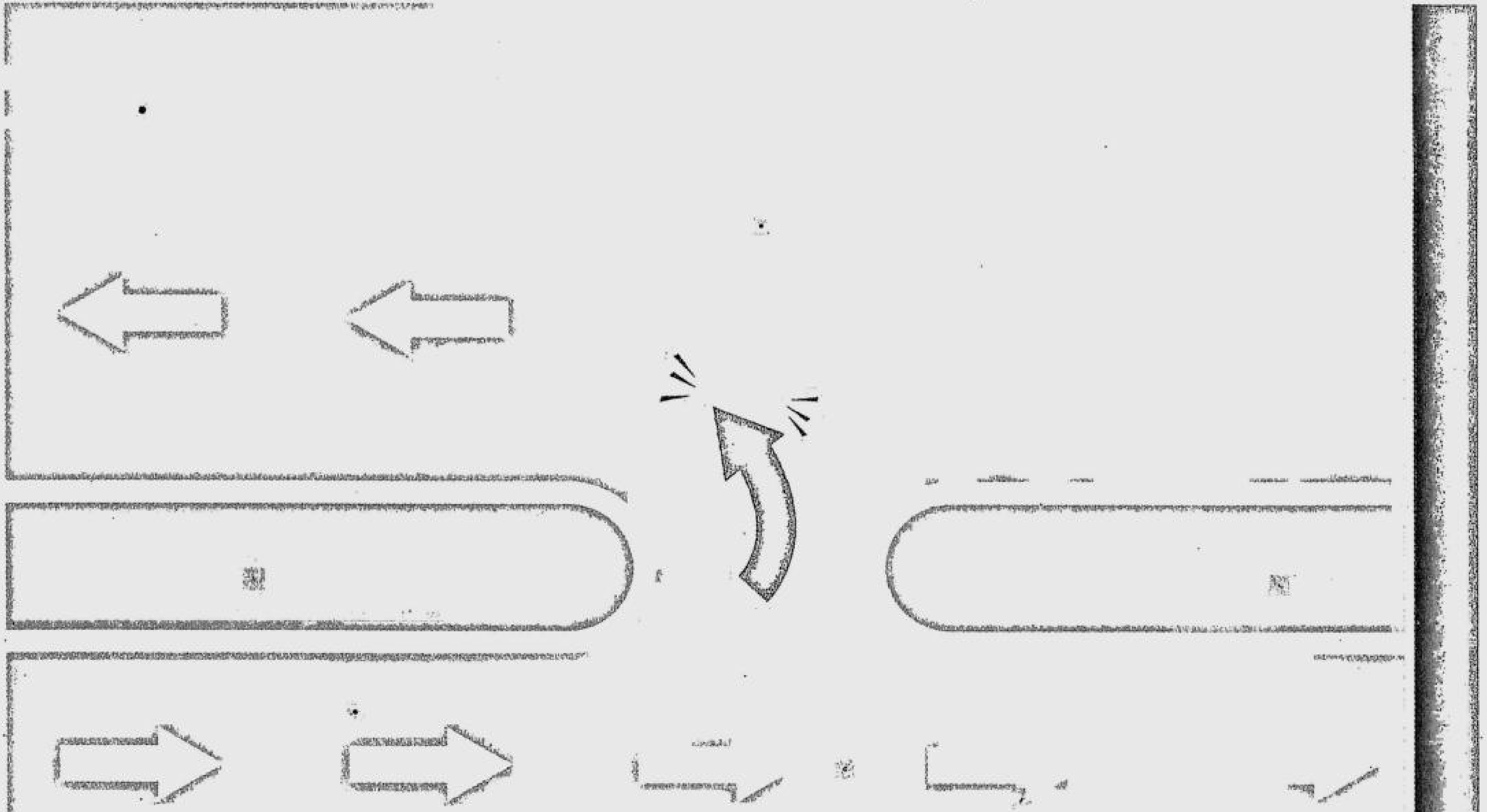
Based on reports gathered by the DA's Field Operations Division, agriculture areas planted with rice, corn, coconut and high value crops, livestock and poultry, fisheries and irrigation facilities and other related infrastructure, were destroyed when "Reming" hit the provinces of Catanduanes, Albay, Carmarines Sur and Norte, Sorsogon and Masbate, in the Bicol Region.

Also, countless structures and farmlands in Quezon, Batangas, Laguna, Rizal, Mindoro Occidental, Marinduque and Romblon were badly hit by the typhoon.

Jesus Emmanuel Paras, DA undersecretary for operations, said there was little chance of recovering the lost produce from the affected farms and fish production areas.

DA ESTIMATES/ B2

IN THIS ISSUE
▨ **2007 payments surplus** seen lower at $1.6B /B3
▨ **Chemrez makes** its debut /B4



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Peso touches 49.54 before closing at 49.77

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY TOUCHED 49.54 BEfore profit-taking pulled the local currency back, closing at 49.77 against the US dollar.

Analysts cited the strong influx of hot money and remittances from overseas Filipino workers' ahead of the Christmas season.

The currency's performance was seen to be in line with the generally bullish sentiment in markets across Asia, despite some concerns on possible intervention by the central banks in the world's fastest growing region.

At the spot foreign exchange market Philippine Dealing System (PDS), the peso opened at 49.58 against the US dollar and hit a fresh milestone of 49.54. But the cheaper US dollar exchange rate attracted demand and brought the local currency to a weaker closing of 49.77 against last week's finish of 49.66.

The 49.54 intra-day level yesterday was the currency's strongest since it touched 49.25 in May 2002.

"It's due to portfolio flows," said Antonio Agcaoili Jr., Asia United Bank senior vice president and head of treasury. "We've got money coming to the stock market and, of course, the remittances from migrant workers."

Portfolio inflows, or those invested in stocks and fixed income instruments, are often referred to as hot money due to their volatile nature. Hot money inflows to the country have hit a net of $2 billion since the start of the year up to mid-November, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

"For the first semester of 2007, Agcaoili said the peso would likely firm up at about 49-50 against the US dollar. He did not share in the expectation of other analysts that the currency could break into the 48:$1 level next year.

He said the BSP, which had earlier announced a foreign exchange assumption of 50-52 for 2007, was not likely to allow the local currency to appreciate too much, but not because of the dampening impact on exports.

"It's not good for the economy," Agcaoili said. "The reason why we should keep the peso at current levels is so that OFW families, the beneficiaries, will have spending power."

Dear or no dear

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

FOR MORE THAN A YEAR NOW, THIS risen-from-the-dead but still cute administration, and a huge Chinese conglomerate called Jinchuan Investment, have been negotiating a deal.

It involves one of the world's biggest nickel mines on Nonoc Island in Surigao del Norte.

Taken over by the government in the 1980s after its operator, Philnico (formerly Marinduque Mining), failed to settle its debts, the mines are now idle.

Jinchuan wants to invest $1 billion to reopen them, which will be the biggest investment here from commodity-hungry China—perhaps a harbinger of more to come.

And so last October, during the visit of Gloriaetta to China, Jinchuan and this cute administration signed an MOU on the Nonoc mines, witnessed by Gloriaetta herself.

If you are on the Chinese side, you are crazy not to believe that this cute administration in truth supports the deal, right? Not so fast, Barabas!

Since both sides have been talking for more than a year now, speculations are rife that somebody in this cute administration is playing hard to get. Is there a deal or no deal?

True, every administration goes on "road shows" abroad—all on expense accounts, of course—to promote foreign investments here.

Yet, littering the local business scene are ugly examples of foreign investment deals gone awry, such as Piatco and Manila Hotel.

In this country, the term "done deal" does not mean anything. Thus, the Nonoc deal can be the test case for this cute administration.

We surely need the investment, for one. Our growth comes mainly from consumer spending, and not from the more desirable, long-lasting growth from investments.

That $1-billion investment will multiply several times to create more economic activities to uplift the lives of millions in Mindanao.

And it is not "hot money," okay. It will stay here for a long time, if not for good.

On the other hand, the Chinese are also looking elsewhere for investments. Since the talks on the Nonoc mines have gone as far as that MOU, a "no-deal" will be a big embarrassment for them. And so, if we drop it again, the Chinese may just pack up.

I mean, our getting the investment is the correct thing to do. What are we waiting for, dear, Christmas?

* * *

And now, the not-so-dear news: The Supreme Court just ruled that the transfer of "mineral rights" is unconstitutional (i.e., NOT okay), and it is already alarming investors.

The bad news came from UP professor Harry L. Roque, director of the Institute of International Legal Studies of the UP Law Center, in a UP-sponsored forum.

To Roque, the ruling will dampen interest in mining. So what else is new, prof?

In another case, you see, the same Supreme Court said the government scheme called financial and technical assistance agreements (FTAA), allowing foreign investments in existing mines, is constitutional (i.e., OKAY).

But then came the Supreme Court ruling on Apex Mining vs Southeast Mining Gold Mining Corp., declaring the transfer of "mineral rights" as unconstitutional.

Based on established jurisprudence, according to Roque, "mineral rights" are property rights and, thus, may be transferred.

And so what went wrong? Roque theorizes that the Supreme Court mistakenly equated "mining permit" with "mineral rights."

In fact, the Supreme Court had another earlier ruling that said "mining rights," but not permits to mine, could be assigned.

Because of possible mix-ups in the future, Roque fears that the latest Supreme Court ruling could ruin the mining industry.

To think, only a division of the Supreme Court made the ruling.

Roque suggests that if it is such a big issue, something that in fact can make or break this country, the Supreme Court en banc should make the ruling.

Hmm. I don't know, but does it mean that the ruling could have been ... well, "cooked?"

* * *

Vice President Noli de Castro (a.k.a., Kabayan) has good news for the real estate sector—plus,, of course, the five million Filipinos who still wish to own homes.

He just cut the interest rates on Pag-ibig housing loans. This make amortization on low-cost houses affordable to those earning P7,000 to P13,000 a month, such as teachers, policemen, and most government employees.

According to De Castro, developers already stopped building houses priced below P500,000 because wage earners could not afford the monthly instalment. And who actually need such houses? Right, the wage earners!

Well, for a P300,000 Pag-ibig loan, amortization comes up to about P2,450 a month. For a P500,000 loan (actually the ongoing price of most low cost houses) it comes up to about P4,400 a month. It's really out of range for most of us.

And so with the cut in interest rates, Kabayan brought down the amortization to P3,300 a month for the P500,000-loan. (The rule-of-thumb is that your amortization should not be more than one-third of your income.)

But here is the clincher: The bigger interest cut applies on the lower amounts of Pag-IBIG loans.

And so for the P300,000 loan, the interest is now 6 percent (from 9 percent), while the P1-P2 million loans now carry interest of 11.5 percent (from 12 percent).

As a bonus for the low-end borrowers, if interest rates in general go down, Kabayan will bring down the Pag-ibig interest rates some more, under a loan repricing scheme done every five years.

Even if interest rates in general go up, the Pag-ibig loan rates stay the same. They will not go up beyond 6 percent.

I just thought that it is a boost to house construction. Which means, actually, decent homes for us!

Neda: Economy still on growth track

From page B1

weighed down by the disappointing 4.8-percent growth posted in the third quarter.

The third-quarter performance brought the average economic growth for the first three quarters of the year to only 5.4 percent, still a percentage point below the full-year target. The economy grew 5.7 percent in the first quarter and 5.8 percent in the second.

This means the economy has to grow by 5.7 percent in the fourth quarter of the year to meet just the low-end of the full-year target.

The Neda earlier said the 5.7-percent GDP growth target for the fourth quarter could be achieved given the decelerating inflation, strong inflows of dollar remittances from overseas Filipino workers, and recent approval by Congress of the P46.9-billion supplemental budget for the national government.

Neri said the supplemental budget will help increase government spending in the fourth quarter, boosting economic growth. He said the entire supplemental budget is expected to be fully used before the year ends.

The Arroyo administration encouraged Congress to pass a supplemental budget to partly compensate for the spending slack, and meet vital expenditure requirements that could not be covered with the limited budget.

The Neda also said the continued slowdown in inflation, resulting partly from the easing of oil prices, and stronger inflows of OFW remittances would encourage consumer spending. Personal consumption has been one of the strengths of the Philippine economy.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 123
CITY OF CALOOCAN

PETITION FOR REHABILITATION
AND SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS
OF BENSAN INDUSTRIES, INC.,

Case No. C-050
For: Rehabilitation

BENSAN INDUSTRIES, INC.,
Petitioner,
x---x

STAY ORDER

Before this Court is a verified Petition for Corporate Rehabilitation with prayer for a Stay Order filed by the above-named petitioner.

Briefly, the petitioner alleges that despite the fact that it has a total assets of P392,210,998.00, it has encountered temporary illiquidity problems which prevent it from paying maturing loans and other obligations. The proposed rehabilitation plan calls for Fresh Funds Infusion From Stockholders; Restructuring of Debts (Tranches A and B); Stay Order; Gradual Build-Up of Capacity Utilization; Used Oil Sourcing Management Re-organization and Rehab Plan Operating Budget among other things. Consequently, the petitioner prays for the issuance of a Stay Order pending proceedings before this Court.

A careful examination of the petition shows that the same conforms substantially with Section 2, Rule 4 of the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation (See also Supreme Court Resolution en banc in A.M. No. 00-8-10 SC). This Court therefore finds the petition to be sufficient in form and substance.

In view of the foregoing, this Court issues a Stay Order in accordance with Section 6, Rule 4 of the afore-cited Interim Rules as follows:

(1) Appointing Atty. Millard Manseguino as rehabilitation receiver who shall be considered as an officer of the Court and who shall have the powers, duties and functions as provided in Section 14, Rule 4 of the above-cited Interim Rules. The rehabilitation receiver must post a bond in the amount of P1,000,000.00 before entering upon his powers, duties and functions and must take an oath as provided under Section 15, Rule 4 of the afore-cited Interim Rules. The petitioner is directed to serve immediately a copy of this Stay Order upon the rehabilitation receiver, Atty. Millard Manseguian who shall manifest his acceptance or non-acceptance of his appointment not later than five (5) days from his receipt hereof.

(2) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by Court action or otherwise against the petitioner and its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with the petitioner including the staying of the proceedings of collection cases filed against the petitioner and the staying of the enforcement/implementation of application/s for extra-judicial foreclosure sale/s and actual foreclosure sale/s, if any against the real and personal properties of the petitioner.

(3) Prohibiting the petitioner from selling encumbering, transferring or disposing in any manner of its properties except in the ordinary course of business.

(4) Prohibiting the petitioner from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as at the date of filing of the petition on November 10, 2006.

(5) Prohibiting the suppliers of the petitioner from withholding supply of goods or services in the ordinary course of business for as long as the petitioner makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this Stay Order.

(6) Directing the petitioner to pay in full and administrative expenses incurred after the issuance of this Stay Order.

The initial hearing of the petition is set on January 3, 2007 at 8:30 in the morning in this Court located at the 2nd floor of Judicial Complex Building, 10th Avenue, Grace Park, Caloocan City. In the event the initial hearing does not push through for any reason like there is no work on such date the hearing shall be reset to January 10, 2007 at 8:30 in the morning. All creditors and all interested parties including the Securities and Exchange Commission are directed to file with this Court and serve upon the petitioner a verified comment on or opposition to the petition with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of initial hearing as set forth above and they are put on notice that their failure to do so will bar them from participating in the proceedings before this Court. All creditors and all interested parties are further directed to secure from this Court copies of the petition and its annexes within such time as to enable them to file their verified comment on or opposition thereto and to prepare them for the initial hearing and to attain this purpose, the petitioner is ordered to file with this Court initially ten (10) additional copies of the petition and its annexes within ten (10) days from receipt hereof.

The petitioner is furthermore directed by this Court to have a copy of this Order published in the Business Section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Bulletin and the Philippine Star considering the probable presence of creditors and interested parties in other parts of Luzon, once a week for two consecutive weeks, with the last publication effected at least three weeks prior to the date of initial hearing as set forth above at the expense of the petitioner.

Atty. Emily P. Dizon, Branch Clerk of Court of this Court is ordered to see to it that the Process Server shall serve immediately copies of this Stay Order upon: (1) Engr. Benjamin S. Santos, President and General Manager of petitioner Bensan Industries Inc., 800 Bagbaguin Road Caloocan City; (2) Ong Meneses Gonzales and Gupit Law Office (Counsel for Petitioner) Suite 1515, Cityland 10, Tower 1, 6815 Ayala Avenue, Makati City; (3) Atty. Millard Manseguino, Diaz Murillo Dalupan, 5F Don Jacinto Building, Dela Rosa corner Salcedo, Makati City and (4) the Honorable Chairman, Securities Exchange Commission, EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

SO ORDERED.
Caloocan City, November 23, 2006.

EDMUNDO T. ACUÑA
Judge

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Choirs
CORO DE SAN ANTONIO
CORO TOMASINO
CHIANG KAI SHEK COLLEGE YOUTH CHOIR
PHILIPPINE CHILDREN'S CHOIR FROM MANDALUYONG
THE MANILA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
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DA estimates ...

From page B1

Around 23,000 hectares planted with rice, with an estimated yield of 37,000 metric tons, were ruined, according to the report that was submitted to Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap. The province of Camarines Norte accounted for most of the damage.

Paras also said that some 3,200 bags of rice worth P1.7 million stored in the warehouses of the National Food Authority in Albay were lost along with the structures.

Corn farms in Occidental Mindoro, Albay and Camarines Sur, measuring a total of 7,348 hectares, were also severely damaged.

The corn farms have a potential yield of 4,000 metric tons. Farmers from the area estimated their losses at P61 million, the report said.

Similarly, 44,000 hectares of coconut farms in Batangas, Cavite, Laguna and Quezon were not spared. Losses were valued at P53.5 million.

Some P229 million worth of high value commercial crops, mainly fruits and vegetables, aside from fishery and livestock, were destroyed in Laguna, Rizal and Quezon, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque and Romblon.

Irrigation facilities and other related infrastructures in the provinces were also damaged. About P70 million will be needed to restore the facilities, the report indicated.

"Reming" is the 18th typhoon to hit the Philippines this year.

According to Bureau of Agricultural Statistics Director Romeo Recide, the combined impact of "Milenyo" and "Reming" will have a significant effect on the growth of the country's agriculture sector in the fourth quarter.

NTC greenlights ...

From page B1

Inc., had separately sought permission to launch different promos and were recently given the go-signal.

Starting Dec. 1, PLDT will start offering new promos based on three components, consisting of monthly access charge discounts, voice call discounts, and an option to be charged per minute or per call.

PLDT spokesperson Ramon Isberto said in an interview that the component mix and the timing of the resulting promo are still being determined.

"It's now a marketing decision," Isberto said.

Globe, meanwhile, is set to offer MyGlobe IMEVRYWHR, an instant messaging (IM) service.

The service is priced at P20 for a day's unlimited use of IM, P120 for 7 days unlimited use, and P500 for 30 days unlimited use.

Globe spokesperson Jones Campos also said that the mechanics will be worked out in detail to ensure a smooth launch for the service.

Both telcos have said they would limit the offerings within their respective networks and subscription will be purely voluntary.

Shares close ...

From page B1

2,795.30, the day's high, from a low of 2,773.04.

The broader all-share index rose two points to 1,746.28.

Losers outnumbered gainers 70 to 34 with 42 unchanged. Turnover totaled 1.9 billion shares with a value of P3.2 billion ($64.53 million).

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephont (PLDT) fell P15 to P2,445.

Ayala Land rose 50 centavos to P15, and Bank of the Philippine Islands added a peso to P63.

San Miguel A and B shares were steady at P66 and P74, respectively. *AFP*

2007 payments surplus seen lower at $1.6B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY EXPECTS TO post a balance of payments surplus of $1.6 billion next year, lower than the $2.8 billion projected for this year, given a cautious outlook on the global economy.

"We're still projecting continued growth in exports and OFW (overseas Filipino workers) remittances for next year but export growth rates may slow down," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said yesterday.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Any transaction that gives rise to a foreign exchange payment by a Philippine resident, such as importation or debt servicing, is a deficit item in the BOP. Any deal that results in the receipt of foreign exchange, such as exporting and inward remittances, is a surplus item.

For next year, Tetangco said the BOP would also be supported by an improvement in foreign investment inflows.

He projected that foreign direct investments would likely hit $2.2 billion next year, better than the $1.9 billion expected for this year.

Unlike portfolio investments which are more volatile, FDIs represent investments in brick-and-mortar businesses that are usually capital- and labor-intensive.

OFW remittances are also expected to hit a new high of $14.1 billion next year, or 5 percent higher than the $13.4 billion projected for this year, BSP estimates showed. The projection includes all cash transfers by OFWs made through both the banking system and informal channels.

Remittances sent through the banking system were expected to grow by another 10 percent in 2007 which, however, was lower than the rate of growth this year of 15 percent.

The BSP estimated that $12.3 billion in OFW inflows would be captured by the banking system this year, rising to $13.5 billion next year.

The projected increase in the OFW remittances next year was anchored on expectations of higher income levels rather than sustained double-digit increases in the deployment of workers abroad.

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DTI retains safeguard duty on glass imports

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry extended by three years the general safeguard measure against imported float glass, saying the local industry needed more time to fully implement adjustments to be competitive.

First imposed in 2004, the measure was in response to a petition from Asahi Glass Philippines Inc., which also sought the extension of the measure.

According to an order signed by Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila on Nov. 6, the three-year extension was also due to external factors that affected the cost competitiveness of the local industry. These factors include increases in the cost of power, fuel and transport, as well as China's massive import demand which pushes up prices of most commodities.

The order set the definitive safeguard duties—to be paid on top of existing tariffs—at P5,016 per metric ton for tinted float glass and P3,971 per MT for clear float glass for the first year. The rates are subject to review yearly for the purpose of reducing them, as provided in the implementing rules of the Safeguard Measures Act).

The DTI order added float glass shipments from Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam because imports from each of these countries had been exceeding certain benchmarks.

Data as of end-August 2006 showed that imports from Korea accounted for 13.3 percent of total shipments, while those from Malaysia and Vietnam accounted for 14.7 percent and 7.2 percent, respectively.

The DTI also said the order was based on a Tariff Commission report on the matter, which said that the domestic industry, apparently referring to AGPI since it is the only local manufacturer of such products, "made serious efforts to comply with its adjustment plan and there is evidence that (it) is making positive adjustment to import competition."

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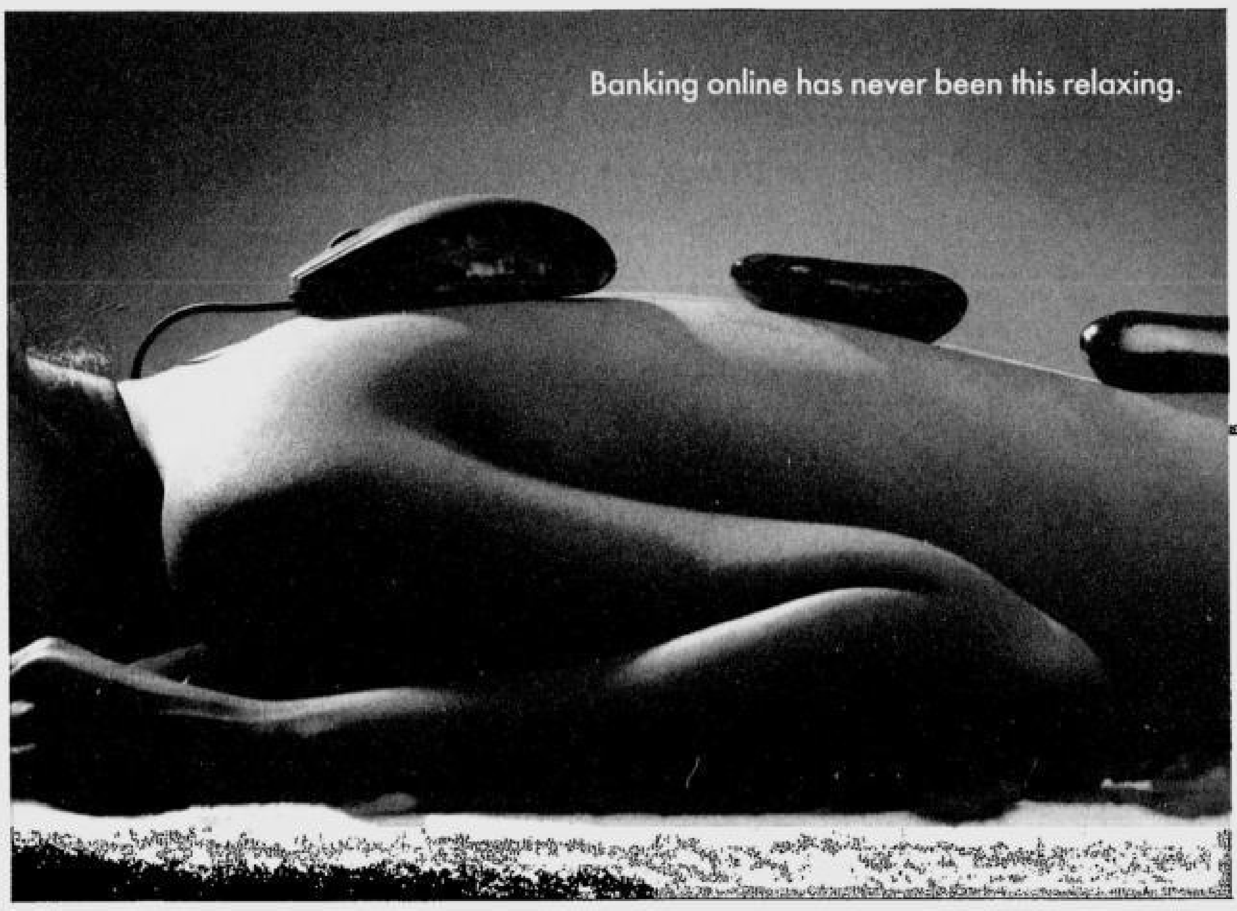
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Bank sees Nov. inflation at 5.2%

Impact of rising liquidity closely watched by BSP

By Michelle V. Remo

SINGAPORE-BASED DBS BANK HAS PROjected that the inflation rate in the Philippines would further slow down to a new two-year low of 5.2 percent in November, owing to a strong peso and declining oil prices.

In a paper released yesterday, the investment bank said the positive effects of these two factors would more than offset the inflationary impact of the rising liquidity.

The inflation rate, or the rate of increases of consumer prices, decelerated to an 5.4 percent in October from 5.7 percent in September. The last time inflation hit a low of 5.4 percent was in June 2004.

The average inflation rate for the first 10 months of the year was 6.6 percent.

DBS' projection was consistent with an earlier statement of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas that inflation would further decelerate in November and December because of the peso appreciation and the decline in the world oil prices.

The strengthening of the peso helps temper inflation because it makes imported goods less expensive. The peso hit an average of 51.64 to the US dollar in October compared to the 55.708 to $1 in the same month last year.

The softening of oil prices likewise temper inflation, with the Philippines importing 90 percent of its oil requirements. Dubai crude, the benchmark used in setting domestic oil prices, settled at $56.42 a barrel in October, lower than the $59.82 a barrel a month ago.

The BSP's Monetary Board kept its key policy rates at 9.75 percent for overnight lending and 6.5 percent for borrowing, believing there was no need for monetary tightening given the lower inflation rate.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. earlier said the central bank was keeping an eye on the impact on inflation of the growing liquidity, buoyed by rising dollar inflows.

Higher remittances increase the consumers' purchasing power, which may trigger an accelerated inflation.

The BSP earlier reported that money supply grew by 16.1 percent in October from a year ago, the highest in four years. The BSP was targeting a liquidity growth of only 13 percent or less.

M3 is the broadest measure of money supply within the economy. It includes money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements.

The BSP, whose main task is to prevent volatility of prices, uses its policy rates as a tool to control inflation.

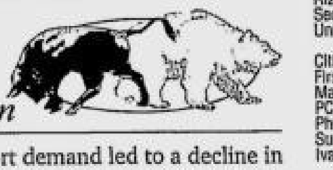
"Right now we are waiting for data on the November inflation from the NDCC, which will be out tomorrow, and we expect the the price index to increase by 5.2 percent year-on-year and 0.7 percent month-on-month," the BSP said.

While liquidity has been a concern, as it could very well stoke inflation, the key factors keeping inflation at bay have been the stronger peso, the lower oil and rice prices, it added.

However, the BSP said inflationary pressures may build up as the spike in year-end remittance inflow is translated into consumption.

Chemrez makes its debut

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

I HAVE TO REPLACE MY CARDIOLOGIST. I rang him up at 3 a.m. and shouted, "My blood pressure is 200." He said, "SELL" and hung up.

There is bad news for Apple. All i-Pods are banned forever. They make planes radioactive.

Worried about the loss of my libido, I went to a medical center called Cialis Angels. The doctor said I was too old for Viagra or Levitra, which might cause my blood pressure to rise so he gave me an injection instead.

He explained that all I had to do was say 'beep' and my bamboo organ would rise and 'beep beep' for it to fall but there was a limit of three times. I did not believe him so I went into the nearest CR and tried it. To my astonishment, it worked. After 10 minutes, I said 'beep beep' and it deflated.

I jumped into the nearest taxi, which was stuck in traffic so the driver beeped his horn. To my horror, it rose again and I had to cover it with my hat. Getting impatient, the driver went 'beep beep' and it subsided again. I ran out of the taxi all the way home.

I told my wife to take off all her clothes and go into the bedroom. "Are you mad," she said. "You haven't touched me for years." "Do as I tell you," I yelled. "I tore off all my clothes and said 'beep' and there I was ready for action. And at that moment, she said, "What's all this beep beep?"

***

It was a short week but an eventful one. In the United States, the ISM index of manufacturing fell below 50, which is the neutral point. Any figure above 50 signifies expansion; any figure below signifies contraction. November came out at 49.5, the first time in three years there has been a contraction. This, combined with the slowing down in the housing starts, has convinced most investors that the Fed will start cutting rates by next March. I think they are over optimistic since Bernanke is still warning about the risk of inflation.

However, the vast majority of investors expect rates to fall so the dollar is weakening rapidly. It is at a 14-year low against the British pound, almost 2 to 1.

That is good for me as I receive my pension in pounds so I can now afford my blood pressure medicine. It is also weak against the euro and 13 of the 15 Asia-Pacific currencies. Because of this, gold which moves in the opposite direction, is now $650 an ounce.

We are awaiting the job creation numbers and if they are 100,000 or less, we can expect Wall Street to move lower. Seasonally, September is a bad month in the United States but this year, it was very good. December is historically a very good month but perhaps this year, everything will be reversed.

The situation in the Middle East is getting worse and if Hezbollah succeeds in ousting the Lebanese government, there is nothing to prevent Syria from sending thousands of long-range rockets into Lebanon.

The presence of international troops will do nothing to stop rockets flying overhead and a full-scale war would break out between Israel and Lebanon, which would be far worse than the previous one.

President Bush must be wondering what to do next. The situation is potentially far more serious than Iraq where the United States is powerless anyway.

At home, the Phisix fell 33 points on Wednesday after the disappointing third quarter data. The economy grew by only 4.8 percent compared with 5.2 percent a year ago and 5.5 percent in the preceding quarter.

This is the slowest growth in five years and a slump in export demand led to a decline in factory production. Farm output also fell and GDP expanded a seasonally adjusted 0.3 percent against an expected 1.2 percent. The government will probably not even reach the lower end of its 5.5 percent to 6.2 percent forecast for 2006.

Most of the weakness came from manufacturing sector, which depends mostly on exports, 20 percent of which go to the United States. Exports contribute 40 percent of GDP and as one Singapore analyst commented, "Growth momentum is set to slow. There is further downside risk".

Industrial production declined 1.5 percent from the second quarter, the steepest fall in two and a half years. Agricultural production fell 0.7 percent from the previous quarter, the biggest drop in 18 months.

This is not an encouraging scenario but by Thursday, it was all forgotten and the Philsix recovered 43 points. One annoying factor behind all this is the volatility of TEL, which accounts for 30 percent of the index and goes up and down like a yoyo. The only factor that was constant these past two weeks was the nonstop selling by foreign brokers. They have been net sellers for the past eight trading days.

According to a PSE report on Thursday, they were net sellers of P550 million but this does not tally with a 43-point rise so I think the block sale of P449 million Jardine Davies was from foreign to local hands. Excluding this, the net selling was a more reasonable P101 million.

The money supply accelerated to 16.1 percent in October, its fastest pace this year. Remittances were partly responsible as we exported another one million Filipinos this year.

Maids and entertainers don't matter but doctors, nurses and engineers do, so we are having a brain drain that will continue. Borrowing from the government sector and the private sector also boosted the money supply.

FLI reported a 29-percent increase in nine-month profits and this was followed by an announcement that the company would offer 3.7 billion new shares, 1.7 billion from existing shareholders.

The money will be used to build an office tower, a shopping mall and an office hub for call centers and information technology companies.

First Gen has withdrawn its bid for Mirant and plans to shift its focus on other acquisition opportunities such as assets being sold by PSALM. BPC is planning to sell its stake in a toll-road operator and take it public through a backdoor option using listed City Resources Philippines as its vehicle.

Even Meralco has indicated that it is up for sale at the right price. PNOC is seeking to raise $385 million in an IPO of 35.7 percent of its stake at P3.20 and may sell an additional 15 percent if there is sufficient demand. 70 percent will be offered overseas.

Chemrez Industries opened at P5.20 reached a high of P5.80 and closed low at P5.20. I expect this stock to hit P7 next year and our research unit has a one-year target of P8.30. The Biofuels Act should be signed soon.

PAL will not accept my wife until she has joined "The Biggest Loser." *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

PPI seeks authority to sell ₱3B worth of fixed value plans

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PRE-NEED FIRM PACIFIC PLANS INC. HAS asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to allow it to sell P3 billion in fixed value life plans.

SEC Commission Secretary Gerard Lukban said the commission en banc had discussed the matter last week but had yet to give its final approval pending the company's compliance to certain conditions.

These plans will be sold separately from the traditional products being monitored under the company's rehabilitation case.

Another source said that the SEC, as a condition to the approval of the request, had required PPI to open a separate account for the proceeds of the sale of the new products to allow better monitoring.

The Court of Appeals earlier overturned a Makati Regional Trial Court ruling that approved PPI's rehabilitation plan.

The CA remanded the case to the trial court so the petitioner, a group composed of preneed plan holders, could present evidence.

PPI, for its part, had said it would question the appellate court's decision.

PPI stressed the Court of Appeals ruling did not reverse the decision of the Makati RTC.

PPI legal counsel Felix Desiderio Jr. said the appellate court merely wanted the Makati RTC to give involved parties the opportunity to present their positions on the rehabilitation plan of PPI.

Investors unloading for PNOC-EDC

SHARES OF CHEMREZ TECHNOLOGIES kicked up in the early trading session yesterday but failed to sustain a rally, as investors sold their holdings to raise cash for the initial public offering of PNOC-Energy Development Corp.

Chemrez yesterday opened at P5.50 per share, hit a day-high of P5.80 but closed at P5.20.

It sold 340.91 million new shares at P4.40 per share during the offer period from Nov. 20-24.

Stockbrokers said Chemrez's offering was at least four times oversubscribed due to strong demand from foreign and domestic investors.

"A lot of people who bought shares in the (Chemrez) offering were waiting to sell out to raise cash for PNOC-EDC. But the market has a lot of long-term buyers and we expect active trading in Chemrez shares," Joseph Roxas, president at Eagle Equities Inc., said.

"The rest of the market will be subdued to make way for the IPO of PNOC-EDC," Roxas added.

Another broker said the appetite for initial public offers was also triggering fresh selling in the market since last week.

"With this positive trend in offerings, investors just want a piece of it (PNOC-EDC)," the broker said.

PNOC-EDC, touted as the largest IPO this year, is raising P16.7 billion through the sale of 5.22 billion new and secondary shares at P3.20 a share. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

New SEC rule seeks to protect investing public

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISsion has approved a ruling that would disqualify securities brokers or dealers from sitting as independent directors in the companies they transact with, INQUIRER sources said. The ruling, which has yet to be released, seeks to protect the interest of the investing public by ensuring that an independent director is free from any possible conflict of interest.

PSE president Francis Lim, reacting to this development, said he believed the ruling might be unfair to brokers.

"For as long as the brokers are not disqualified under the corporate governance code, why close the doors on them? As long as brokers respect insider trading rules, it may be unfair to totally ban (them). It may send the wrong signal that they can't be trusted," Lim said.

The sources, however, clarified that the SEC was not singling out stock brokers but as the ruling also covered bond traders and other securities traders from the restrictions.

Under Section 38 of the Securities Exchange Code, any corporation with a class of equity securities listed for trading or with assets in excess of P50 million and with 200 or more holders should have at least two independent directors.

For this purpose, an "independent director" should be a person other than an officer or employee of the corporation, its parent or subsidiaries, or any other individual having a relationship with the corporation. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 4, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	20,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	44	45	44	45	1,147,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	62	63.5	61.5	63	2,990,300
China Banking Corp.	695	705	695	705	10,230
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.51	0.51	0.48	0.49	9,220,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	78.5	78.5	78.5	78.5	149,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	48.5	49.5	48.5	49.5	889,300
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	59	72	59	62	8,500
Philippine National Bank	41.5	43.5	41.5	42.5	8,900
Phil. Savings Bank	48	48	48	48	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	24	24	23	23	92,200
Security Bank Corp.	63.5	65.5	63.5	65.5	226,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	49	49	49	49	500
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.95	4.95	4.7	4.95	409,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30	30.5	30	30.5	12,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1600	1620	1600	1620	960
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.38	147,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	260	260	260	260	5,250
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2085	2085	2080	2080	740
Ivantage Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.46	1.46	1,277,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	55.5	55.5	55	55	21,800
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	53	53.5	52.5	53	619,100
Manila Electric Co. A	32.5	32.5	31.5	31.5	42,900
Manila Electric Co. B	33.5	34	32.5	32.5	792,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	11	11	10.25	10.75	7,025,700
Petron Corp.	4	4.05	4	4.05	3,808,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	320,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	29,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	310,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	40	40.5	39.5	40	3,874,100
Pancake House Inc.	6	6	5.8	5.8	25,000
RFM Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.04	1,067,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	66	65.5	66	116,700
San Miguel Corp. B	73.5	74	73.5	74	108,400
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.24	2.24	2.08	2.08	1,071,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.25	20	19.25	20	165,600
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.97	1.12	0.96	1.04	52,480,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3	3	2.95	3	1,398,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.7	1,186,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	6.1	6.1	5.9	5.9	20,000
Republic Cement Corp.	3.9	4	3.85	3.85	1,223,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.5	5.8	5.1	5.2	79,380,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.75	0.76	0.68	0.68	65,110,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.19	14,450,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.51	0.51	0.46	0.46	120,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	101,000,000
Ayala Corp.	500	505	495	497.5	445,650
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.62	0.65	0.62	0.64	70,750,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.9	6	5.9	6	937,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.055	0.055	71,300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.75	2.85	2.75	2.8	813,000
APC Group Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.32	2,250,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	107,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.06	2.06	1.96	1.96	240,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	3	3	3	3	81,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.64	1.68	7,794,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	5.1	5.5	5.1	5.4	5,088,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	459,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	573,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	9.2	9.2	9	9.2	1,187,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	4.1	4.1	3.7	3.7	829,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.7	1.78	1.64	1.66	6,705,000
Pacifica	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	8,500,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.145	0.15	6,940,000
SM Investments Corp.	292.5	302.5	292.5	302.5	304,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	140,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	170,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.18	0.18	0.16	0.165	8,760,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.12	920,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.5	15	14.5	15	7,915,600
Belle Corp.	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.16	4,603,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.86	1.98	1.84	1.84	4,746,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.4	4,400,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	58,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	39,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.35	22,510,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	160,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	3,170,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	20,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0675	0.0675	0.065	0.065	5,300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.62	1.66	1.62	1.66	4,069,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.75	20,000
Interport Res.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	7,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	358,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.58	0.59	0.5	0.5	3,140,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.68	0.69	0.68	0.69	460,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.18	2.2	51,911,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.36	0.36	1,630,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	16	16.25	16	16	1,306,900
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.77	0.77	0.69	0.7	35,110,000
SM Development Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.48	2.5	298,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	9.8	9.9	9.8	9.9	14,266,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.59	0.59	140,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.1	1,900,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	19.25	19.25	19	19.25	18,600
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.62	1.62	2,844,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1235	1260	1235	1250	315,670
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6	6	5.8	6	4,606,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2440	2450	2440	2445	178,740
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	1,800,000
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	188,000
IPVG Corp.	3.25	4	3.25	3.75	3,101,000
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	600,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.06	0.055	0.06	1,300,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	19,000
Transpacific Broadband	4.6	4.7	4.55	4.7	55,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.032	141,300,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	70,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19.25	19.75	19.25	19.25	833,600
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	70,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.16	1.36	.1.14	1.36	131,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.08	2.18	2.08	2.1	762,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	40,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.56	570,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	800	800	800	800	60
iPeople Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	412,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.18	2.22	204,000
Paxys Inc.	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.5	975,400
Philippine Seven Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.4	6.4	6	6	5,066,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.7	6.7	6.3	6.3	706,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	251,300,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.9	8.1	7.8	8	1,441,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	70,000
Benguet Corp. B	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	16,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	9,230,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	77,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	111,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	289,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.25	4.25	8,805,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	21	21	20.5	20.75	54,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.88	0.89	0.85	0.86	2,890,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.25	6,720,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	123,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,900,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.98	1	0.98	0.99	370,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	220,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	11,200
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	107	108	107	108	8,100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.5	393,100
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES					
Information Capital Tech.	4	4	4	4	5,000
SQL*Wizard Inc.	1.7	2.22	1.7	2.22	45,000

CURRENCIES

December 4, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.749794	1.000000	49.6950
Japan	Yen	0.006495	0.008663	0.4305
United Kingdom	Pound	1.484967	1.980500	98.4209
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.096439	0.128621	6.3918
Switzerland	Franc	0.628336	0.838012	41.6450
Canada	Dollar	0.655243	0.873897	43.4283
Singapore	Dollar	0.486153	0.648382	32.2213
Australia	Dollar	0.593332	0.791327	39.3250
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.988949	2.652661	131.8240
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.199940	0.266660	13.2517
Brunei	Dollar	0.484582	0.646287	32.1172
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000109	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020944	0.027933	1.3881
UAE	Dirham	0.204148	0.272272	13.5306
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.333700	66.2782
Korea	Won	0.000808	0.001077	0.0535
China	Yuan**	0.095686	0.127616	6.3419
Argentina	Peso	0.244631	0.326264	16.2137
Brazil	Real	0.346166	0.461681	22.9432
Denmark	Kroner	0.134179	0.178955	8.8932
India	Rupee	0.016849	0.022472	1.1167
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.208798	0.278474	13.8388
Mexico	New Peso	0.068015	0.090711	4.5079
New Zealand	Dollar	0.512785	0.683901	33.9865
Norway	Kroner	0.122579	0.163484	8.1243
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012316	0.016426	0.8163
South Africa	Rand	0.104866	0.139860	6.9503
Sweden	Kroner	0.110841	0.147828	7.3463
Syria	Pound	0.014444	0.019264	0.9573
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023187	0.030924	1.5368
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000349	0.000466	0.0232

Repair of power lines to cost Transco P900M

VILLAGERS pass a fallen electricity post in the island of Catanduanes, caused by Supertyphoon "Reming," which hit the Philippines last week. The death toll is feared to rise to possibly 1,000. AFP

Supertyphoon 'Reming' toppled 89 towers, damaged 27 more

By Abigail L. Ho

THE STATE-RUN NATIONAL TRANSmission Corp. (Transco) will have to shell out almost P900 million to repair and replace steel towers, transmission lines and wooden poles damaged by Typhoon "Reming."

In a presentation yesterday, Transco president Arthur Aguilar said Typhoon Reming toppled 89 steel towers and left 27 more either bent or broken in half when it wrought havoc on the Bicol region and other provinces in Southern Luzon last week.

The super typhoon also damaged 887 wooden poles and various substation facilities and equipment, mostly in the Bicol region, he added.

He said the cost of emergency power restoration alone amounted to P90.65 million, with P33.06 million to be spent on installing 230-kilovolt (kV) temporary by-pass sections, P49.35 million on the repair of wood poles and 69-kV steel poles, and P8.24 million on administrative and miscellaneous expenses.

The replacement of the damaged 230-kV steel towers, 116 in all, would cost P793.44 million, he said.

Prior to Typhoon Reming, Transco had already published invitations for interested entities undertake a P485-million contract to replace the 42 towers that were felled by Typhoon "Milenyo" in September.

Aguilar said these 42 collapsed towers should be replaced before next year's typhoon season, or before July 15.

Right now, he said almost the entire Luzon grid was running on temporary poles.

"The actual towers were rated for 270-kilometers-per-hour winds. The temporary poles that we have now can withstand 180-kph wind speeds. These can't endure strong typhoons, so we really have to put in place the permanent replacements as soon as possible, before the [next] typhoon season strikes," he had earlier said.

During yesterday's press briefing, he pointed to pilferage as one of the reasons Transco's steel towers were not able to withstand the strong winds of both Typhoons Milenyo and Reming.

In a helicopter survey of parts of the Bicol region last Friday, Transco personnel caught on tape some men climbing one of Transco's steel towers, attempting to saw off parts of it, for sale to junk shops as scrap metal.

"Pilferage is really a big problem. After Typhoon Milenyo, we were able to apprehend a lot of people," he said. "There are about 2,500 towers between Metro Manila and Bicol, so it's really difficult to keep watch on them all."

He said members of host communities as well as of law enforcement agencies should help protect Transco's facilities from looters, as this would help accelerate repairs on damaged towers and lines and help prevent towers from becoming too weak to withstand strong winds.

Transco aims to repair all of its lines and restore power in the region before Christmas.

Japan offers help for RP fiscal reforms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS OFFERED to grant technical and financial assistance to help the Philippines stay on track to achieving stability in the fiscal sector.

Representatives from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was scheduled to meet with officials from the Philippines' Department of Finance to discuss potential projects related to improving the fiscal sector.

"They are asking us what we need. It is a sign of appreciation of our (Philippine government's) efforts to attain fiscal stability," Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran said yesterday in an interview.

Beltran said one of the possible areas to be covered by the program was improving the revenue collection efficiency of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, the government's biggest revenue earners.

The BIR currently badly needs to improve tax collection, as it struggles to meet its full-year tax collection goal of P675.4 billion.

In the first 10 months of the year, the BIR collected P532.8 billion, about P20 billion short of its target for the period.

The shortfall was attributed partly to the decline in interest rates and lower volume of government securities issued during the period, which trims collection of taxes on government securities and income from bank deposits.

Beltran said JICA has a tax administration center in Japan where programs to improve tax collection efficiency were being offered. He said Japan could also sponsor training of revenue personnel from the Philippines.

But on its own, the BIR has already put up several programs to beef up tax collection. These include the use of third-party auditing, "industry benchmarking," and "tax mapping."

Third-party auditing is a process of determining possible under-declaration of income taxes by comparing income statements.

Industry benchmarking refers to comparing income tax returns of companies in the same industry, to determine possible under-declaration of taxes.

Lastly, tax mapping is a program wherein the BIR sends its personnel to personally visit establishments to check on their tax compliance.

The Japanese government is the Philippines' biggest source of official development assistance (ODA), either in the form of concessional loans or grants.

Clark employment hits record

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC Zone—An estimated 9,451 workers were hired in Clark during the last 10 months, reports showed.

Levy Laus, president of Clark Development Corp., said the zone was now employing 46,334 workers. The zone had 36,883 workers as of December 2005.

Laus said labor figures have doubled since 2001 and the end-October data was Clark's "all-time high."

This, he said, made Clark one of the most active job-generating economic zones in Central Luzon.

Citing reports from the CDC's customer service department, he said the workers report to 339 of the 389 registered companies.

By sector, garments and sewing firms account for 13,465 workers or 29 percent of the labor force; electronics, 7,162 (15.43 percent); commercial, 5,445 (11.73 percent); information technology and telecommunications, 5,121 (11.03 percent); tourism, 4,506 (9.71 percent), and industrial-manufacturing, 3,907 (8.42 percent).

More women are employed in Clark, accounting for about 53.72 percent.

Of the workers, at least 76.94 percent were residents of Pampanga, 12.34 percent from Tarlac and the rest from Metro Manila and other provinces.

More jobs are expected to be created with the operations of two tourism projects by Korean investors in the first quarter of 2007 and the opening of Fort Stotsenberg Hotel and Casino by December.

Call centers Cyber City Teleservices Inc., IntelliRisk Management Corp. (IRMC) and Sutherland Global Services Inc. were reportedly hiring more workers.

Legazpi City prepares to become a tech hub

By Delma L. Peyra
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—THIS CITY HAS BEEN ranked as the 2nd fastest growing small city for 2006 by the Policy Center of the Asian Institute of Management (Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking) among 37 cities with populations of less than 200,000.

Located more than 500 kilometers south of Metro Manila, this city has upped the ante when it hosted the 1st Bicol Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Congress last Nov. 23-24.

The city hosts five medical transcription companies and three call centers.

Among the advantages of small cities like Legazpi in competing for ICT investments are its lower wages and pool of manpower.

Legazpi hosts a number of universities including Bicol University and Aquinas University that produce ready manpower.

In addition, well known IT schools such as AMA Computer University, STI and Singapore's Informatics have all established offices in the city.

The Southern Luzon Technological College in downtown Legazpi, aside from its degree courses, offers a three-month medical transcriptionist training program, data encoding, computer animation course and a global call center competency program.

"In fact, a lot of firms looking for business process outsourcing services have approached us to supply them with our graduates," according to Rosemarie Rey, SLTC president.

All in all, the city produces more than 30,000 graduates a year.

Another criterion for a city's competitiveness is its ability to provide environment conducive for doing business.

"We will offer tax holidays and incentives for locators," Mayor Noel Rosal said during the first day of the congress.

"We shall refocus our capital outlay from building amenities for which the city has already a lot," he added.

The local government was also preparing for the certification of the new Legazpi IT Park as an ecozone by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and the Board of Investments.

Once approved, Legazpi City will have two certified ecozones.

Legazpi has a 33-hectare special economic zone in Barangay Banquerohan, which has been in place since 1996.

With IT and IT-enabled services being one of the top three priority areas for economic development set by the government, the city of Legazpi is riding high on its efforts to become the next IT hub.

PMAP moves to address labor mismatch

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PERSONNEL MANAGEment Association of the Philippines yesterday tapped partners in the academe and government to address the "mismatch" between graduates of higher education and the needs of industries.

During a tripartite summit held yesterday at the RCBC Plaza in Makati City, PMAP said the mismatch issue has been a concern since the 1970s but has become more significant because of off-shoring of work from developed countries, and the boom of call centers and business process ventures in the country.

Aside from business leaders from the sectors of information technology, medical tourism and manufacturing; attendees included trade officials and education officials from both the government and private sector.

Conference chair Grace Abella-Zata said the issue had been traditionally attributed to too many graduates—mostly with business degrees—when what employers needed were those with vocational and technical skills.

INDUSTRY leaders have been struggling to find an answer to the problem of the mismatch between the available labor and the needs of industry since the 1970s.

"Another way to view the mismatch issue (nowadays) is that there is an oversupply of low-skill resources while there is a lack of supply for high-skilled jobs," Zata said.

Based on a PMAP survey conducted in June, competencies for high-skill jobs would include not only technical knowledge and skills for specific functional areas, but also generic abilities and attitudes such as proficiency in both written and spoken English.

A subsequent focus group discussion also found that other highly-sought competencies also included confidence, flexibility to deal with people of different nationalities, maturity and resilience to overcome challenging situations in the work place.

In a prepared statement, PMAP said that while the problem was rooted in the educational system, the academe, industry and government must work together and come up with short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions.

"The goal of the summit is to identify partnerships in the areas of curriculum enhancement, research, enhanced student internship programs, faculty development and (other areas where the three sectors could link up)," PMAP added.

Also, the group called for career advocacy through which parents and students would be informed about employment trends and opportunities.

Further, PMAP said the government and other concerned sectors must have a unified workforce plan that would be aligned to the national economic plan.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY East Service Rd., South Luzon Expressway, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila	Gerald Sturm	Consultant
SYKES ASIA, INC. 26/F, Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Cyril John Mathias	Indian Client Support
SYKES ASIA, INC. 26/F, Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Wonjeong Lee	Korean Client Support
AMBAK CONSULTANCY & GEN. SERVICES CORP. UG-22 City & Land Mega Plaza, ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City	Sang Mook Lee	Customer Service Manager
SEOJUNE KOREA, INC UG-9 City & Land Mega Plaza, ADB Ave., cor. Garnet Rd., Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City	Hee Man Lee	Assistant General Manager
AUSENCO ASIA PTY LTD. 3/F Rufino Tower, V.A. Rufino St., cor. Ayala Ave., Makati City	Barrie Neil Greensill	Manager
SUMITOMO MITSUI CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD. 2/F Pioneer House Bldg., Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Takuji Shigeyama	Construction Manager
WINSROAD, INC. U-8, 9510 Dona Juanita Bldg., Taguig cor. J.P. Rizal Sts., Valenzuela City	Taekyun Lee	Marketing Manager
JUGLOBAL PHILS., INC. 4/F Alco Bldg., 391 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Won Kun Ra	Manager for Marketing
GE MONEY BANK, INC. (A SAVINGS BANK) E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., cor. Monte De Piedad St., Cubao, Quezon City	Ramdas Venkatasubramanian	Productivity Leader/ Vice President
AMIABLE ONES CO. LTD. Unit 12B, Fortune Palace, Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Wansang Yang	Consultant
VOI DOT COM, INC. 17A, Washington Tower, Asia World City, E. Aguinaldo Blvd., Parañaque City	Byeong Ryol Yoon	Managing Director
AMIABLE ONES CO., LTD. Unit 12B, Fortune Palace, Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Zhengde Shi	Marketing Manager
TYSON AGRO-VENTURES INC. 179 Mariano Ponce St., Caloocan City	Nai Siew Ng	Director of Operations for Poultry Processing
MILANOS TECH, INC. 27 Davao St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona I, Las Pinas City	Soon Kwang Hong	General Manager
KIMS TRAVEL & TOURS CORP. 1535 M. Adriatico St., Malate, Manila	Joo Hee Han	General Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI – December 5, 2006)

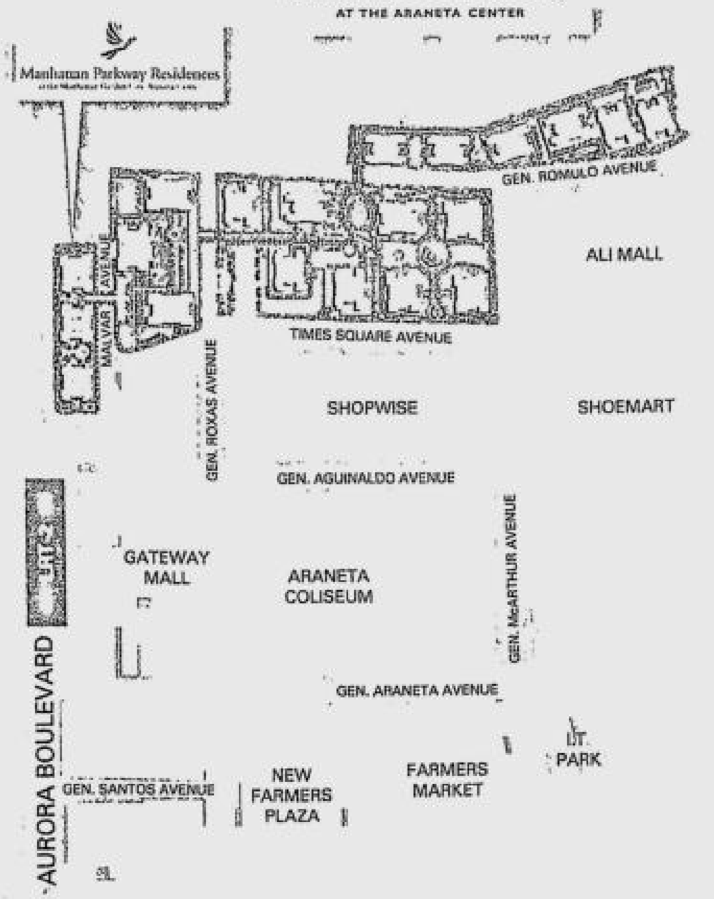
A Breakthrough Way to

LIVE, SHOP, PLAY and MOVE

at the Crossroads of Metro Manila

Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER

Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER


Manhattan Parkway Residences
GEN. ROMULO AVENUE
ALI MALL
MALVAR AVENUE
TIMES SQUARE AVENUE
GEN. ROXAS AVENUE
SHOPWISE
SHOEMART
GEN. AGUINALDO AVENUE
GATEWAY MALL
ARANETA COLISEUM
GEN. McARTHUR AVENUE
GEN. ARANETA AVENUE
LT. PARK
AURORA BOULEVARD
GEN. SANTOS AVENUE
NEW FARMERS PLAZA
FARMERS MARKET
E·D·S·A
MRT3

The Manhattan Garden City is your key to a *better, more fun* way to live in Metro Manila. It's the country's first transit-oriented development, linking all of its 20 residential condominium towers to the metro's fast, traffic-free train systems. And to the shops, offices, restaurants and entertainment centers at the Araneta Center. So you can *live, shop, play* and *move* like never before.

Manhattan Garden City: Connecting You to a Cutting-edge Lifestyle.

The Araneta Center is at the crossroads of Metro Manila. And the meeting point of not one but two train systems: the LRT2 along Aurora Boulevard and MRT3 along EDSA. Manhattan Garden City is the first and only residential project to be connected to both lines. So you're just a stroll away from a quick and hassle-free ride to virtually all major destinations from north to south and east to west of Metro Manila.

15 mins.
to Marikina

8 mins.
to Ateneo

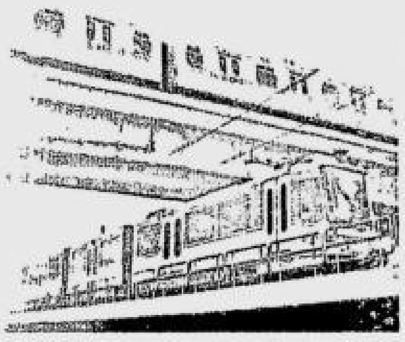
Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER

17 mins.
to Makati CBD

29 mins.
to Divisoria

The LRT2 joins the metro's east and west sides, from Santolan in Pasig to Recto Avenue in Manila. The MRT3 runs from North Avenue to Taft Avenue along EDSA. Both lines connect with the LRT1, which travels from Monumento in Caloocan to Baclaran in Paranaque. The LRT1 links up with the MRT3 at Taft Avenue in Pasay and the LRT2 at Doroteo Jose in Manila.

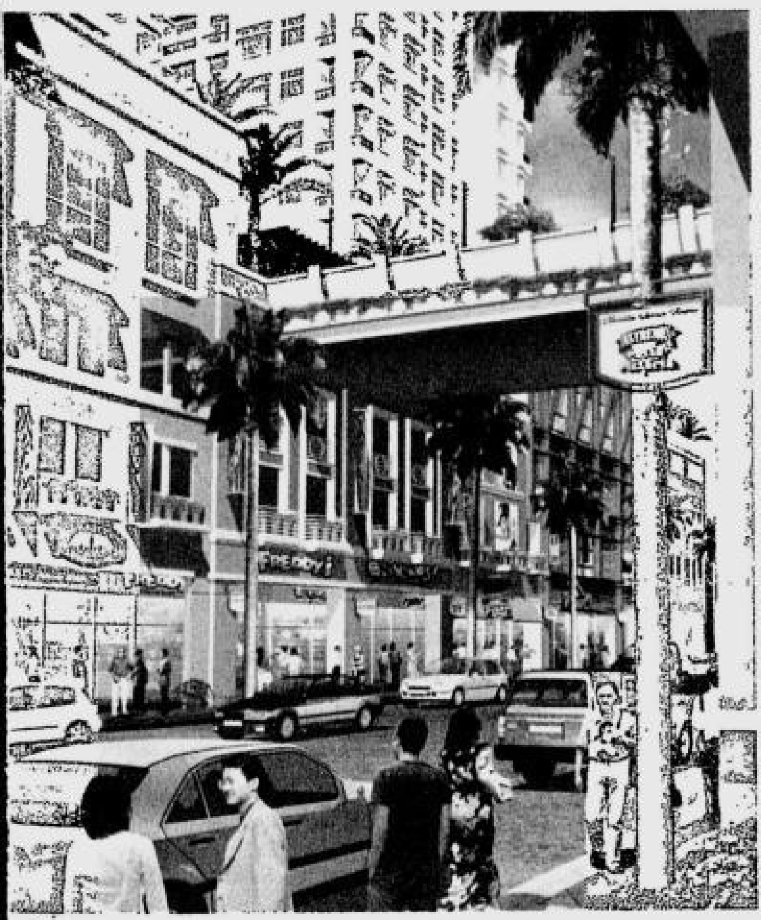
Get around the Metro the Fast and Easy Way.

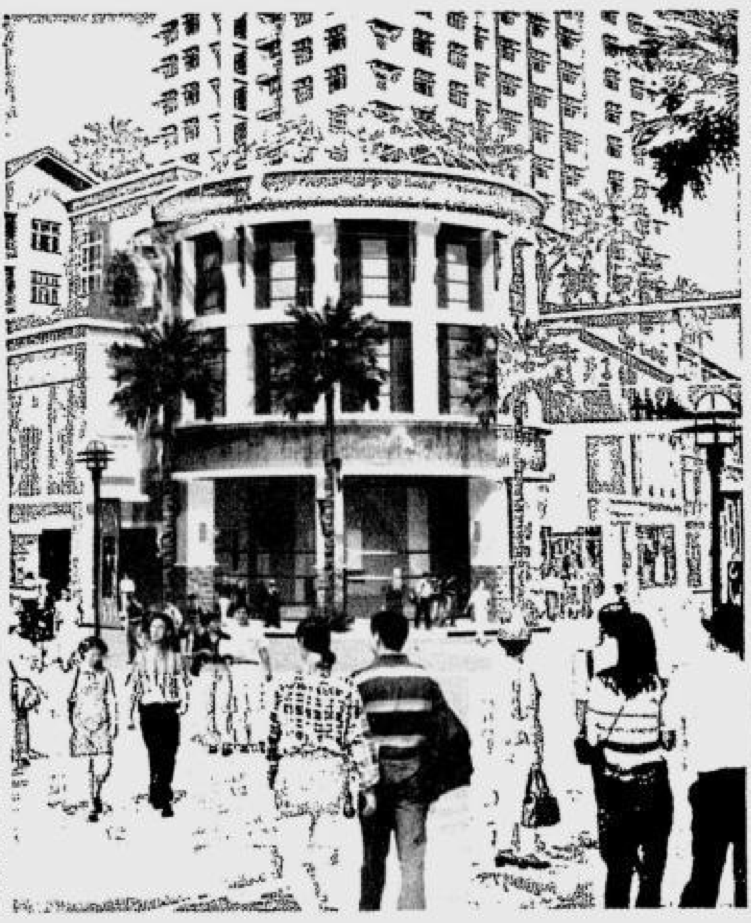


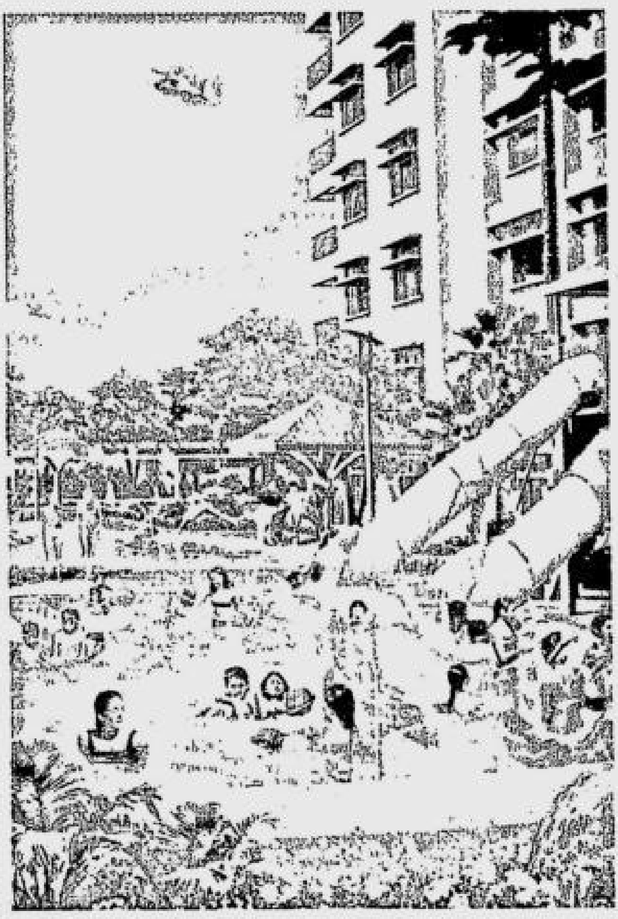
With the LRT/MRT trains close by, you and your family have the power to go places.

The LRT2 takes your children to Ateneo or UP in Quezon City in just 8 minutes. Or to Manila's university belt in 19 minutes. Your wife is only 29 minutes away from Divisoria's bargain stores. Through the MRT3, get to your office in Ortigas in 6 minutes, Ayala Avenue in 17 minutes or Taft Avenue in 22 minutes. And since both lines link up with the LRT1, you can reach many more places in the metro than ever before.

All this means you spend less time on the road— and more time relaxing at home. More time to enjoy with family and friends. More time for leisure and exercise. More time for fun.





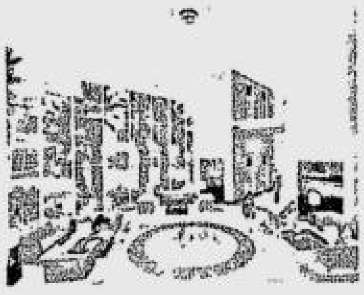


Your Parkway to the Trains.

From your home in Manhattan Garden City—and for the first time in the country—going to the train stations is as refreshing as a walk in the park.

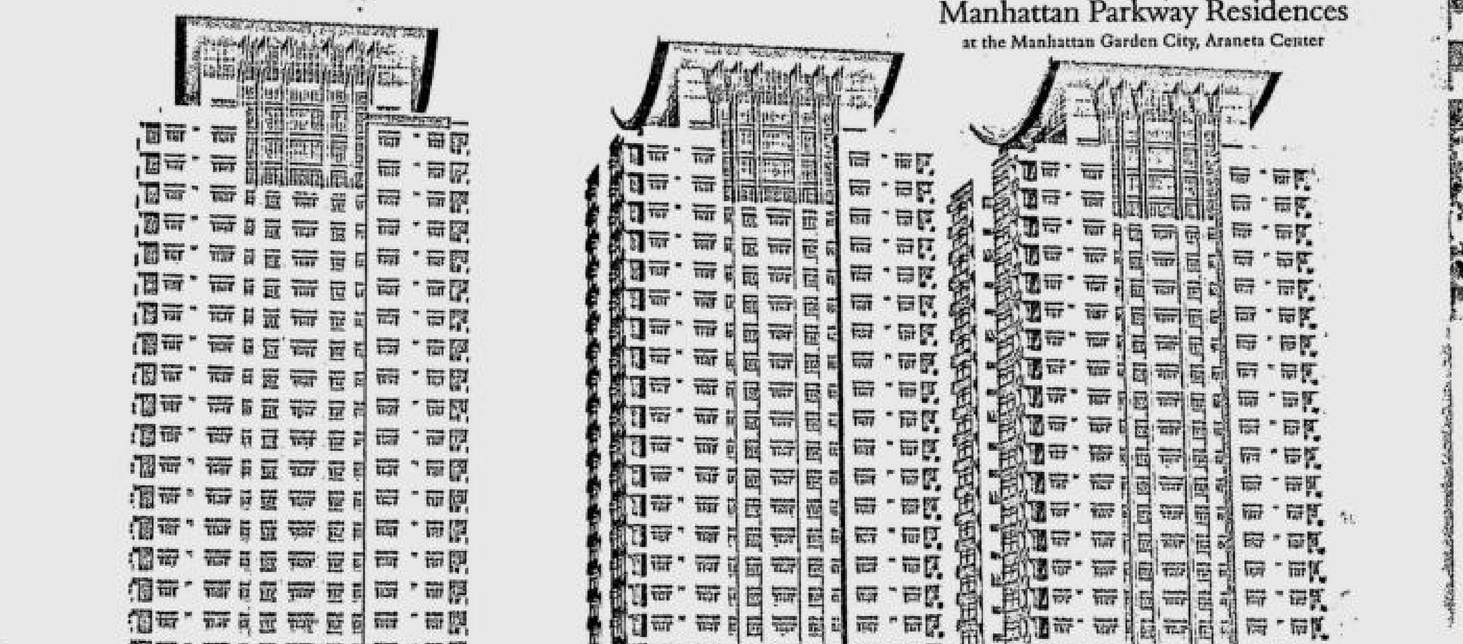
A 729-meter-long footbridge standing four stories above the streets interconnects all 20 residential towers of your community. And connects them directly to the LRT2 and MRT3. There's a 4-meter-wide walkway in the middle and 2 meters of greenery and sitting areas on each side. So you can stop to smell the flowers. Or just sit around and watch the world go by.

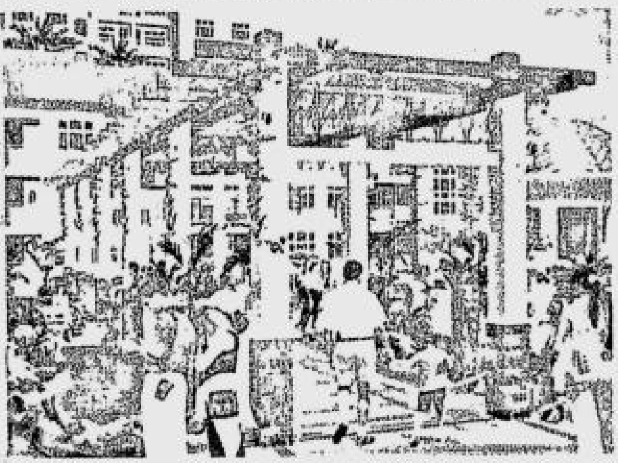
Your Gateway to the Araneta Center.



Manhattan Garden City is part of an even larger home that is the Araneta Center. Your entryway: a four-level transfer station featuring a hotel-style lobby, a grand staircase and four passenger elevators. The transfer station connects you to the retail row at the ground floor. The parking area at the basement, second and third levels. And the garden walkway at the fourth level. What's more, an elevated landscaped footbridge connects your home at the third level to the Araneta Center. And to a myriad of dining, shopping and entertainment options. Topping the list is the Araneta Coliseum, home of the country's biggest sporting and entertainment events. Other draws include the trendy Gateway Mall, famous for The Oasis, a unique interior floating garden. And shopping hubs like Rustan's, SM, Shopwise, Ali Mall and Farmers Plaza.

Manhattan Parkway Residences
at the Manhattan Garden City, Araneta Center





Manhattan Parkway: Paradise at the Top.

Reservations are now accepted for the first phase of Manhattan Garden City: Manhattan Parkway. Its three towers host spacious executive studios and relaxing one-bedroom suites. The units look out on the Araneta Center and Manila Bay, making you feel on top of the world. Arrayed at the fourth-level garden deck are leisure amenities including trellised walkways and jogging trails, a fitness station, an indoor sauna/spa and a gym. What's more, footbridges will connect you to a lot more play amenities at the upcoming phases. So you can enjoy hours and hours of fun right at home.

A FIRST from Megaworld in cooperation with Security Bank!

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- As low as P7,800* a month fixed for 25 years at 11% interest per year
- As low as 8.5% interest a year fixed for 10 years
- Choose from no down payment and low down payment schemes

*Based on P1 million principal amount

For details, call 810-3333

Visit our SHOWROOM at the third floor of the Gateway Mall.

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Shell supports pioneering environmental conference

PILIPINAS SHELL PETROLEUM CORP supported the pioneering workshop on Green Productivity, Green Purchasing for a Green Philippines (GP3) Conference workshop held at the Hotel Dusit in Makati City on Oct. 23 to 24.

Clean & Green Foundation, a non-government organization spearheaded the event which featured international experts who shared their knowledge on environmentally responsive processes and practices. Among the attendees were representatives from Pilipinas Shell, Unilever, Chowking Foods Corp, SM Malls, local government units, national agencies, and non-government organizations.

The two-day conference-workshop-exhibit was a joint project of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and administered by the Clean & Green Foundation.

Clean & Green Foundation chairperson and former First Lady Amelita Ramos proudly expressed that the GP3 conference "aims to share the competencies and the impetus to get the program running with the government as lead in green productivity and green procurement." Green productivity is defined as manufacturing using environment-responsive materials and processes and is increasingly being practiced by the world's biggest manufacturers.

International speakers included John Polak of Global Ecolabelling Network in Canada, Asia Pacific's foremost expert on Green Productivity Kun-Mon Lee and American trainor Scot Case, with former DENR Secretary Bebet Gozun who served as moderator during the workshop. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was the keynote speaker during the affair. Topics discussed were market trends and pressures, product improvement through life cycle assessment and design for environment processes, green procurement, and market positioning through ecolabelling.

Shell companies in the Philippines (SciP) country chair Edgar Chua participated as one of the representatives of the business sector and speaker during the conference. In his speech, he expressed that Shell focuses on its processes and products in pursuing green productivity. He said that Shell continues to deliver environment-friendly products such as unleaded, low sulphur, and Better Mileage gasolines and ensures that operations in Manufacturing, Retail, and Distribution follow stringent environmental standards. Apart from these, he cited that various operations in Shell do not only create economic benefits but also take into account its environmental and social impacts.

In his speech, he highlighted Shell's active role in educating the public, consumers and suppliers through conservation awareness and advocacy as well as constant sharing of knowledge with business organizations, such as the Philippine for Business Environment (PBE), among others. He impressed that it is imperative for businesses to be environmentally responsible as the resources of nature supports all its activities.

IL&FS, SAHI COURTESY CALL WITH GMA

Representatives of one of Asia's biggest construction and finance conglomerates, Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) and Strategic Alliance Holdings Inc (Sahi), the local partner of IL&FS in the Philippines recently called on President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to express interest in investing in the country. The conglomerate is currently studying possibilities of venturing into local infrastructure and information technology projects. Shown are (from left): Alexander Asuncion, chair Dell Equipment and Construction Corp; Willhardo Morales Jr., VP and COO, Strategic Alliance Holdings Inc; Cezar Quiambao, chair and CEO, Strategic Alliance Holdings Inc; Hari Sankaran, managing director, Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services; Rep. Edwin Uy, Congressman, Isabela; Joaquin Lagonera, senior deputy executive secretary; Gary Vazquez, chair, Vazbuilt.

3 P1 million cash, 3 Mazda3 sedans in Sun's Triple Treats Prize Overload

SUN'S TRIPLE TREATS PRIZE OVERLOAD gives you the ultimate barkada blowout this Holiday Season. Not only will you and two of your friends get big discounts on your Sun Prepaid load by joining the Sun Triple Treats, you also get the chance to win 3 P1 Million cash or 3 brand new Masda3 1.6L sedans for the major draws in the Sun Triple Treats Prize Overload raffle promo - including other great prizes for the weekly draws!

The first raffle draw was held last Nov. 14, with Sun Cellular giving away a total of nine 1G iPod Nanos, ninety Robinsons' Gift Certificates and one hundred twenty 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited loads and one hundred fifty Text Unlimited loads to lucky Sun Triple Treats Group members.

Other amazing prizes like Philips DVP-5965 DVD Players and 4G iPod Nano units will also be given away on the succeeding draws. Gadgets and gizmos including Canon Powershot Digital Cameras, Sony Ericsson K910i and K990i 3G cellphones, Canon Mini DV Camcorders, IBM Thinkcenter personal computers, Samsung LCD 32" wide screen televisions and Samsung Home Theatre Systems with 40" LCD screens, Robinsons Gift Certificates, Sun Call and Text Unlimited and Text Unlimited load prizes will be raffled off in the following weeks until the final draw to be held on Jan. 30.

Sun Cellular subscribers who want to join the raffle will need to register through SMS by texting REG<space>First Name/Last Name/Address and sending to 333. Sun will then reply the "group name" which you will send to your barkada and other potential members. To join the second and third barkada member, text JOIN<space>Group Name/First Name/Last Name/Address and send to 333. Visit the Sun Shop or call the Hotline 200 if you are having a hard time registering your group.

Once registered, your group is automatically included in the raffle promo. By loading up on Sun regular load cards, 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited, Text Unlimited, Daylite Call and Text Unlimited cards, Sulit cards, IDD call cards, Xpress Load, Dealer vouchers, and Docking Station regular and unlimited reloads, subscribers get to earn raffle entries. For every P15 worth of load, the group earns 1 raffle entry. For loads of P750 within 30 days, the group earns 10 entries. For the second succeeding month group load of P750 within 30 days, the group earns an additional 20 entries and 30 additional entries for the third succeeding month.

So register, load up on credits, earn more raffle entries and increase the chances of driving home a Mazda sedan each and winning P1 Million pesos each in cold cash for you and your barkada in Sun Triple Treats Prize Overload!

For more information, see posters or call the Sun Triple Treats Hotline at 395-8333 and 333 toll-free, or visit www.suncellular.com.ph. Promo period is from Oct. 23, 2006 to Jan. 28, 2007.

ST. LUKE'S GREAT EXPECTATIONS PACKAGE

The Great Expectations Package (GEP) makes world-class healthcare available to budget-conscious but discriminating expectant moms and dads. The Great Expectations Package (GEP) was initiated by the St. Luke's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, headed by Dr. Marietta Sapaula (center), and supported by the Pediatrics Department headed by Dr. Jean Poblete (right), and Department of Anesthesiology head Dr. Asuncion Asis (left). For more information, please call (632) 727-5542 or 723-0101 local 7297.

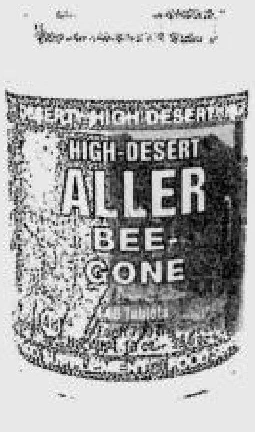
PHILIPPINE FEEDMILLERS VISIT FARM IN IOWA

Randy Van Kooten, (2nd from right) a soybean and corn farmer from Iowa, shows some of his grain produce to a group of Philippine feedmillers and grains traders who visited his farm recently. The farm visit was arranged by AG Processing Inc (Ag.P.), one of the biggest farmers cooperative in the US and its Philippine agent, MPM Enterprises. The Philippines is the biggest importer of US soybean meal in Asia. With Van Kooten in the picture are (from left) Ed. Lazo of Vitarich Corp; Ruel Lagtapon, Asian terminal Inc (ATI), Poshan Dy, General Milling Corp (GMC) Hans Walter Chua, Simon Enterprises; and Marie P. Marte, president, MPM Enterprises.

Product FILES

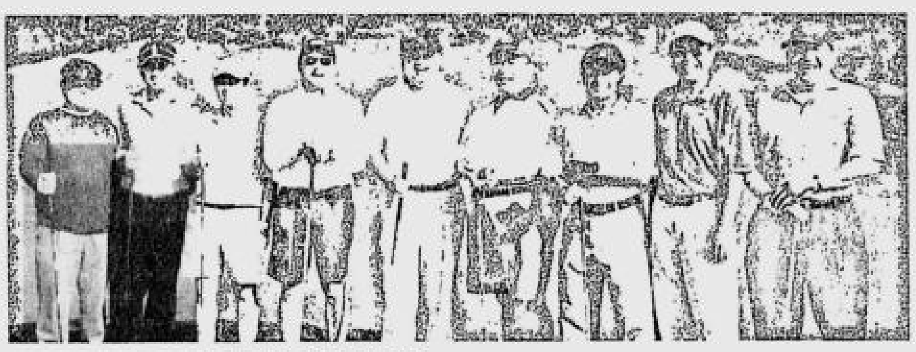
The fast and effective relief for allergic reactions

HDI NETwork Aller Bee-Gone contains many herbs to provide fast and effective relief for allergic reactions like asthma, sinusitis, food and skin allergies. It also helps build up immunity against allergens, so that allergies will not pose such a big problem to you anymore.



3RD ASTRAZENECA, SLMC-HI RESEARCH INVESTIGATOR'S AWARDS

AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals sponsored the 3rd AstraZeneca-St. Luke's Medical Center Heart Institute Research Investigator's Awards held at concurrently with the hospital's 20th anniversary celebration. Shown are (from left): Eric Resureccion, Ferdie Villanueva, Liza Roasa, Dr. Fabio Enrique Posas (head, SLMC-HI, research division), Dr. Jerome Laceda (2nd place), Dr. Florema Sy (1st place), Dr. Jolyle Mazo (3rd place), Alan Knox (president, AstraZeneca), Dr. Cecille Brillo, Billy Eleazar, Dr. Christine Yeban, Angie Hernandez and Dr. Roland delos Reyes.



1ST IREMIT GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 1st iRemit Golf Tournament last November 15 at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club was held successfully with 85 players. The tournament was part of iRemit's 5th Anniversary celebration in the Filipino remittance industry. It was participated in by iRemit top executives and partner representatives. The ceremonial tee-off was initiated by iRemit chair Bansan Choa, iRemit president and COO Harris Jacildo, iRemit director Gilbert Gaw and Ben Tiu. Shown are (from left): iRemit director Gilbert Gaw, Sumifruits' Paul Cuyegkeng, John Cua, Dynamic Realty and Resources Corp president Eduardo H. Yap, Ben Tiu, iRemit director Greg Yu, iRemit president and COO Harris Jacildo, lawyer Bayani Tan, iRemit chair Bansan Choa.

Bits Clips

LCSPC HS '81 25th year

LAGUNA COLLEGE OF SAN Pablo City High School Batch '81 will be celebrating it's 25th (silver) grand reunion on Dec. 9, at the G and E Garden Pavilion, Barangay Concepcion, San Pablo City. You may get in touch with Fabian Rodelas (560-5555), Filmin Torres (562198) and Athena Villapando (562-7192).

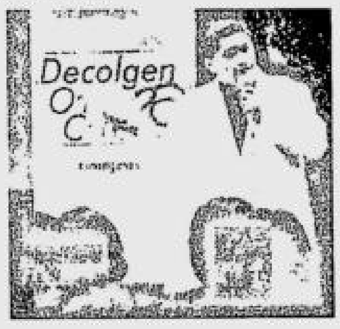
Get Your US tourist visa

THE COMPREHENSIVE SEMINAR BY US LICENSED immigration lawyer Michael Templo of Templo & Templo Immigration Consultants Seminar will provide you with information that will highly increase your chances of getting approved. Know how to efficiently go through the visa application process, properly fill up your application form, prepare your supporting documents, interviewing skills with the consul, learn the do's and don'ts and practical tips, reduce your mistakes to zero. There will also be a question and answer session. Seminar schedules are Dec. 5 and 9, 1 to 4 p.m. 5th floor YL building. V.A. Rufino (Herrera) corner Salcedo St. Legaspi Village Makati. Register or call for details at 028935964 SMS 0917-5380797 or 0917-6082276.

Goal Montessori's 25th year

THE GIFT OF ADVANCED LEARNING (GOAL) Montessori School of Sun Valley Subdivision in Paranaque City will observe its 25th anniversary in a formal celebration at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Intercon in Makati on Dec. 11. It will be an all-night affair starting at 4 p.m. with a one-woman art exhibit of Maridel Conching , mother of a student and an active member of the PTA (Parents Teacher Association). Some government, community and religious leaders are expected to attend the occasion.

DECOLGEN ON CALL AT DUTY FREE

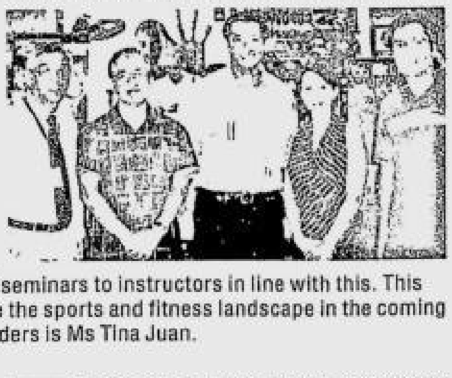


Decolgen, the nasal congestion expert, recently conducted its free clinic, Decolgen On Call, at Duty Free Philippines last Nov. 9. Hundreds of lucky Duty Free employees participated in the whole-day event, which offered free doctor consultation, samples and exciting games and prizes. The Duty Free run of Decolgen On Call is the 12th of a series of free clinics conducted by Decolgen this year. Since its program launch in 2002, the activity has reached over 100,000 Filipinos in different parts of the country.

DAVIES ODOURLESS PAINT LAUNCHED

Davies Paints Phils Inc recently launched Davies Biofresh, the country's first truly affordable odourless and antibacterial paint that leaves virtually no foul odour during and after painting. Photo shows (from left) Edison Oribiana, business development manager for Manila, Johnlee Garcia, VP-marketing and Lee Albert Gan, brand manager for Davies Biofresh.

SET TO INFLUENCE THE SPORTS, FITNESS LANDSCAPE



SSFC is a comprised of fitness and sports professionals with the common goal of making sure that the trainings given in gyms and fitness shops and by fitness instructors/trainers are safe and effective. The group offers certification, trainings and seminars to instructors in line with this. This group is set to influence the sports and fitness landscape in the coming months. One of its founders is Ms Tina Juan.

Hinduja TMT acquires Affina, a multi-city BPO company in US

HINDUJA TMT (HTMT) RECENTLY ACQUIRED a US-based BPO company, Affina, headquartered in Peoria, Illinois, USA for an undisclosed amount. Affina, a reputable BPO brand in the US, has annual revenues of USD 60 Million, and operations in 7 centers in the US and Canada. The company has a three-decade track record of serving globally recognized clients. This acquisition will enable HTMT to access a large and high quality client base, comprising many Fortune 500 companies, while enhancing HTMT's onshore delivery capabilities in the US in specialized domains like consumer electronics, FMCG, retail, government and telecom.

This deal strengthens HTMT's marketing and onshore delivery presence in the US. HTMT will now be operating from 14 cities, 7 of which are in North America, 1 each in the Philippines and Mauritius and 5 in India. The integrated entity would have a customer base of over 65 customers and a total headcount of over 9,000 employees. This acquisition will nearly double HTMT's combined revenues to over USD130 Million.

HTMT's operations in the Philippines is located at HTMT Cyberpark in Quezon City, a 2,000-seat state-of-the-art call center facility, which is HTMT's single largest facility outside India. With the acquisition of Affina, HTMT anticipates an increase in its operations in the Philippines, and expects this to translate into a 40 percent growth in its headcount over the next 12 months.

Commenting on the acquisition, Pushkar Misra, CEO HTMT Philippine Operations said, "This acquisition of Affina enhances HTMT's global delivery capabilities. HTMT and Affina unite in ensuring the delivery of superior service and innovative BPO and customer care solutions to its clients. This will mean more business coming into our Manila Center and therefore creation of more jobs."

DTI AWARDS SHARP

Recently, Sharp proved true to its commitment of bringing a tradition of excellence in the Filipino home when it won one of the most sought after award in local trade, the Gold Award of Excellence in Service and Repairs by the Department of Trade and Industry. DTI grants three awards for successful local businesses in terms of growth and ethical practices: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Shown are (from left) Assistant Secretary Maria Theresa L. Pelayo, concurrent caretaker of DTI-National Capital Region, Undersecretary Carissa Cruz-Evangelista, regional operations group, Undersecretary Zenaida Cuison-Maglaya, consumer welfare and trade regulations group, Layugan of Sharp, DTI Secretary Peter B. Favila and director Arnaldo A. del Rosario, DTI-National Capital Region Area 2.

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **PACIFIC TIMBER AND WOOD RESOURCES, INC.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New Export Producer of band saw cut and semi-processed wood on a Non-Pioneer status, at an annual capacity of 1,420,000 bft., with project site located in Lilo, Banza, Butuan City.

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

(PDI--Dec. 5, 2006)

OFFICE PERSONNEL

- Male or Female
- 20-35 years old
- Computer literate
- Preferably proficient in Abacus and Amadeus

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Anticipating 15 Years of Original Filipino CreativIT

JANUARY 6, 2007 MARKS DIGITAL INFOSTRUCTURES 15 years of original Filipino creativIT.

What started as a one-man software company founded in 1992 by Nilo Poso, Digital Infostructure has grown into a powerhouse enterprise software company serving blue-chip Philippine companies such as BPI, McDonald's, Texas Instruments, to name a few.

It's the tenacity on its vision that makes Digital Infostructure tick. From the day it was founded, Digital Infostructure has concentrated its energies and resources on creating an "infostructure system" that will power an enterprise of any size and type of business. The rest, as they say, is history.

Today, Digital Infostructure boasts of an array of software brands that have become popular in the market such as PayFast, PeopleWARE, BOS/e PeopleWARE and iBOS/e WebShell. These products run on DIET or Digital Infostructure Enterprise Technology, a flexible and robust enterprise software technology.

What sets Digital Infostructure apart from its competitors is its innovative capability despite its meager resources as an independent software developer.

Digital Infostructure has outlived three Philippine presidents (Cory Aquino, Fidel Ramos, and Joseph Estrada) and weathered all military coups and economic crises that prevailed during the period.

Digital Infostructure business address is on the 12/Flr 6780 Ayala Ave. Makati City with telephone numbers (632) 893 8844 / (632) 8938865 /(632) 8923325 or visit online www.infostructure.com.ph digitalinfostructure@eenterprise.net

6th World Bazaar Festival treats kids with exciting toy collections

AS PART OF THIS YEAR'S GRAND CHRISTMAS spectacle, Worldbex Services International (WSI), in cooperation with ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., will feature exciting toys and trifles for the kids as it highlights outstanding collection and meet-and-greet moments with classic characters like Barbie, the Care Bears and Garfield at the 6th World Bazaar Festival, slated on December 7-17, 2006 at the World Trade Center.

Everyone will also get a chance to enjoy some feel-good music and outstanding theatrical production presenting "Alladin Christmas Wish" on December 7, 9, 10 and 17 as children get to live a fairytale-like experience.

An interactive and productive workshop entitled "Creativity Workshops for Kids and Adults" will also be conducted by The Thought Factory offering enhancement exercises for the inherent capabilities of both kids and adults in the field of arts.

With the partnership of Worldbex and ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., the 6th World Bazaar promises to make possible not just an enjoyable moment for all shopping lovers but also a worthwhile learning experience to all.

For inquiries, you may call tel. nos. 5316350 or 5316374 and look for Ms. Rosemarie Manrique or you may send email at info@worldbex.com

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ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE

Accion contra el
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AE CI
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ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE (ACF-E) is a Spanish humanitarian, voluntary, non-governmental (N.G.O.), non-religious, non-political and non-profit making organization. ACF-E has been providing assistance to vulnerable populations in the province of Surigao del Sur, Philippines since March 2006 through the FOOD SECURITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH VALUING ANCESTRAL HERITAGE Project. In line with this, ACF-E intends to award a supply contract for:

- Procurement of eight (8) units multi function Agricultural Mill serviced by a 20 hp diesel engine.
- The multi type mill has an adjustable apparatus built in with complete accessories to mill corn, rice and coffee.
- The capacity should be of 1,600 kilos processed grains daily for an eight-hour operation.
- Recovery of at least 62% to 72%. Supplier/contractor should install the machinery and equipment and provide technical training for the operators and technicians in the designated areas.

Designated areas are located in the Republic of the Philippines, CARAGA Region, Province of Surigao del Sur: Gacub, Hinapuyan, Carmen; Pakuan, Lanuza; Umalag, San Miguel; Banahaw, Maitum, Tandag; Bagyang, San Miguel; Bitaugan, San Miguel; Mampi, Lanuza and Himatagan, Agsam, Lanuza

The tender dossier is available from Fundación Accion contra el Hambre Office, Yubengsing Bldg., National Highway, Dawis, San Agustin Sur, Tandag, Surigao del Sur. It can also be requested at the following mail address: ach_tandag@yahoo.com.ph and accion_logistica@yahoo.es and fax number +63 86 211 44 45. The tender dossier will be available also at this web page http://www.accioncontraelhambre.org/alai.php?p=1

The deadline for submission of tenders is December 19, 2006 at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, Philippine time.

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ERRATUM

In the Senate Rules of Procedure Governing Inquiries in Aid of Legislation which was published on Page B7 of this paper on December 1, 2006, the following sentences were inadvertently omitted:

- Adopted, August 21, 1995; Published in the August 24, 1995 issues of Malaya and Philippine Star, The Rules of Procedure Governing Inquiries in Aid of Legislation can also be accessed at the Senate website: www.senate.gov.ph
- No amendments have been made in the Rules since its adoption.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Office of the Secretary
CENTRAL OFFICE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
2/F Building 1, San Lazaro Compound, Rizal Avenue, Sta. Cruz, 1003 Manila
Trunk Line 743-83-01 local 1625; 1626 Telefax: 741-97-75
URL: http://www.doh.gov.ph

Invitation for Bids

IBRD-Assisted Second Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project
SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT AND PERIPHERALS
IFB NO. WB-2006-12-28 (34)
Loan No. 7290-PH

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has applied for a Loan from the World Bank toward the cost of IBRD-Assisted Second Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for the Procurement of Information Technology Equipment and Peripherals (IFB No. WB-2006-12-28 [34]).
2. The Department of Health (DOH) now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the above-mentioned Goods. Delivery of the GOODS is required by thirty (30) calendar days. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. The procurement will be conducted through the government open competitive procedures specified under the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of the Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, with some amendments as stated in these Bidding Documents. The estimated project cost is One Million Four Hundred Seventy Three Thousand Philippine Pesos (PhP 1,473,000.00).
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Procurement Division (PD) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the 2nd Floor, Bldg. 6, Procurement Division Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of One Thousand Philippine Pesos (PhP1,000.00). The method of payment will be on a cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The DOH will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on December 15, 2006, 1:30 p.m. at the address given below.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 1:30 p.m., December 28, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the following form and amount in Pesos or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Form of Bid Security	Minimum Amount in % of the Estimated Project Cost for the Contract for the item/s for which Bid is submitted
Cash, certified check cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	Lot 1 – PhP 10,000.00 Lot II – PhP 2,500.00 Lot III – PhP 700.00 Lot IV – PhP 1,000.00 Lot V – PhP 530.00
Bank guarantee	Lot I – PhP 15,000.00 Lot II – PhP 3,750.00 Lot III – PhP 1,050.00 Lot IV – PhP 1,500.00 Lot V – PhP 795.00

8. Bid opening shall be on December 28, 2006, 1:30 p.m. at the address given below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *DOH* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

COBAC CONFERENCE ROOM
Ground Floor, Building 6
Department of Health
San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz,
Manila
Facsimile number: 7419775
Trunkline Number: 7438301 local 1625 and 1626

(Sgd.) **ALEXANDER R. PADILLA**
Undersecretary of Health
And COBAC Chairperson

(PDI – December 5, 2006)

OBITUARIES

MARY MANION BAUSA

Peacefully joined our Lord
at the age of 95.

Her bereaved children Rodolfo, Wilhelmina, Lily, Pilar, Ramon, Marilyn, Honesto Jr. and their respective spouses; grandchildren; great-grandchildren and other relatives and friends request you to join them in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at
Chapel-A2, La Funeraria Paz,
G. Araneta Avenue,
Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, December 7, 2006 at the Loyola Memorial Park-Marikina City, after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at Funeraria Paz.

Please omit flowers.

Col. Jaime Piopongco Ret.

June 8, 1920 – November 26, 2006

Age 86 passed away peacefully Sunday, November 26, 2006 at Los Angeles, California. He is survived by his wife, **Elizabeth Sanvictores**, children and in-laws **Rolando Sr. & Eleanor Gonda, Romy & Jean Llorico, Roberto & Evangeline Navarro, Jessie Piopongco † & Susan Baysa, Alexander & Ma. Teresita Piopongco**, 15 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren.

Memorial Services will be held at Recessional Church, Forest Lawn Memorial Park at Glendale, California on December 2, 2006 at 9am.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."

—John 3:16

"Once you have snatched me from death kept my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living."
Psalm 57:14

AMORSOLO GUZMAN REYES

Peacefully joined his Creator
on December 2, 2006 at the age of 71.

His loving wife **Lydia**; children **Arleen & Cesar Reyes, John Anthony & Joyce Reyes**; grandchildren **Charles Andrew, Carl Adrian, Andrea Carla, Jan Mikhail, Jan Carlo, Maria Mikaela** and **Maria Patricia**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, C. Raymundo cor. Mercedez Ave., San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Thursday, December 7, 2006 at the Pasig Catholic Cemetery after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Immaculate Concepcion Cathedral.

The Bishop, The Clergy, and The Christian Faithful of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Urdaneta and the Family, Relatives and Friends
Announce with deep sorrow the untimely demise of

RT. REV. MSGR. AMADO M. LOPEZ, H.P.

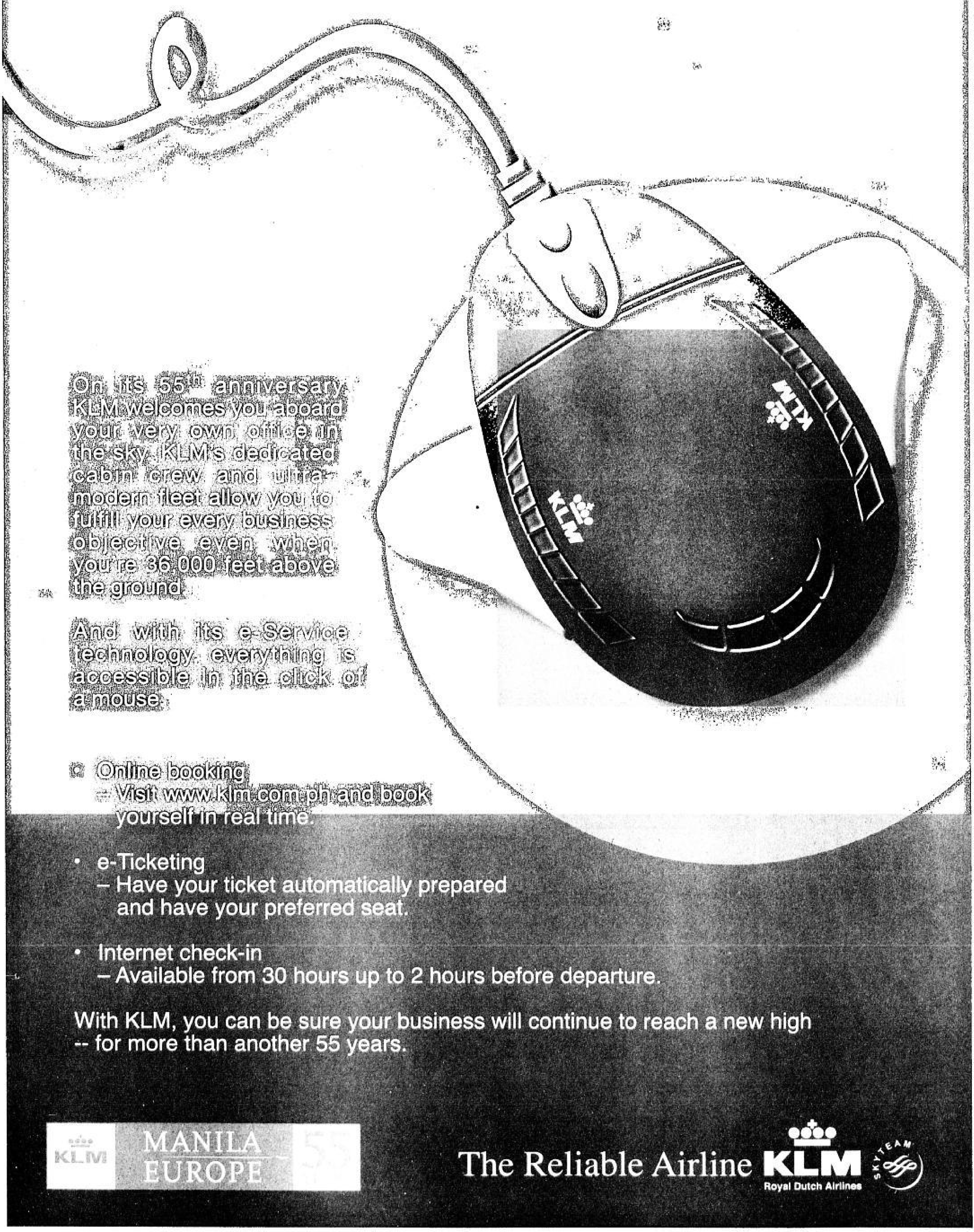
(September 12, 1920 – November 28, 2006)

His remains lie in state at their family residence in San Andres Street, Villasis, Pangasinan, on Monday, December 4, 2006 at 2:00 PM. His body will be transferred to the Parish Church of St. Anthony Abbot, Villasis, Pangasinan.

Interment will be on December 7, 2006, Thursday, at 8:30 AM at St. Anthony Abbot Parish Church, Villasis, Pangasinan.

AIR FRANCE KLM

KLM... making your business click for 55 years.



On its 55th anniversary KLM welcomes you aboard your very own office in the sky. KLM's dedicated cabin crew and ultra-modern fleet allow you to fulfill your every business objective even when you're 36,000 feet above the ground.

And with its e-Service technology, everything is accessible in the click of a mouse.

- Online booking
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- Internet check-in
  – Available from 30 hours up to 2 hours before departure.

With KLM, you can be sure your business will continue to reach a new high -- for more than another 55 years.

KLM MANILA EUROPE 55

The Reliable Airline KLM Royal Dutch Airlines SKYTEAM

IN THIS ISSUE
- Fit but not healthy /C4
- Different sides of group exercise /D1

LifeStyle

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Mönmilk
Pure, Natural and Tasty
Mönmilk PURE MILK
AVAILABLE AT LEADING SUPERMARKETS NATIONWIDE

THE *HILOT* starts with the client in a sitting position for the massage of the hands, arms, face, head and neck. The massage continues while the client is in a supine position.

HILOT includes short periods of meditation, especially after a massage of the head.

Filipino traditional massage explained in new book

By Michael Dizon Garcia
Contributor

> 'Hilot' draws from respected healing practices like acupuncture, Ayurveda and Yunani-Tibb

A BOOK ON *HILOT* was launched recently at the Goodwill Bookstore at the Glorietta 3 mall in Makati City.

The book was written by Dr. Jaime Z. Galvez-Tan and Ma. Rebecca V. Maraña. Entitled "Hilot: the Filipino Traditional Massage," it is about the ancient art of healing that has existed in the Philippines for thousands of years.

Hilot is a fusion of Filipino traditional healing and other great traditions of medicine, especially Chinese. It was also influenced by the Indian Ayurvedic medicine and the Yunani-Tibb practice in Greece and Persia.

The new book is the product of more than 30 years of study of *hilot* in 20 major ethno-linguistic groups from major regions and islands in the country.

It relates the origin of the massage and the underlying indigenous theories on health and illnesses.

Techniques of the *hilot*, as gathered from the experiences and oral histories of indigenous healers in various regions of the Philippines, have been synthesized and presented in a standardized sequence.

Galvez-Tan has been a practitioner for the past 30 years of clinical medicine combining North American and European healing techniques with Asian and Filipino traditional practices.

The former secretary of health is currently a professor at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine. He was the regional adviser for health and nutrition for East Asia and the Pacific in 1996 of the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

In 2002-2005, he was the vice chancellor for research at the University of the Philippines Manila and executive director of the National Institute of Health Philippines.

Maraña, on the other hand, finished her Bachelor of Science

FILIPINO/ C3

VIRGIN coconut oil is applied to the area to be massaged.

BPI Express Credit

For once
get somethin
you really
this Christm

[illegible] fashion outlets to get discounts and gifts

[illegible] Gas Jeans [illegible] Le Mini Shop [illegible] Nike Park, Nike Stadium [illegible] Sports (Adidas, Arena, New Balance, Spalding) [illegible] The North Face, Travel Club, United Colors of Benetton [illegible]

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1000, Series of 2006.

BPI We'll take you farther.

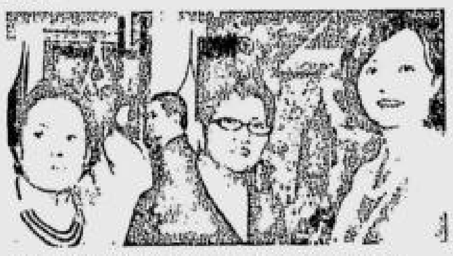
PATTY Manuel, Bonito Singson, Choy Cojuangco, Karen Santos, Lisa Araneta Marcos and Marissa Echaus Cojuangco

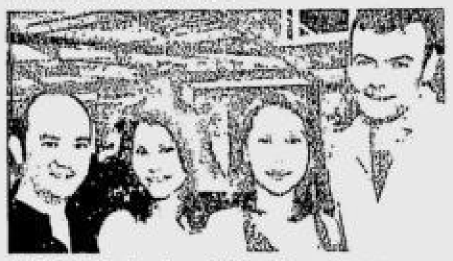
THE GANG: Sherwin Lao, Sen Sanchez, sultry Maureen Santiago, and nice couple Vicky and Roberto Barrera

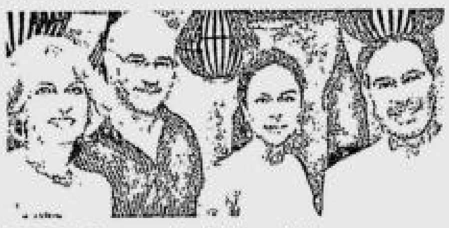
DR. Donald Dy, Dr. Cora Jose, Anne Marie Saguil and Mix's top gal Mia Borromeo

A place that's as smooth as silk

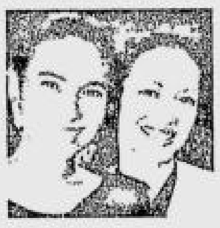
GINA Bello, interior designer Saps Utam and Arun


NENA del Rosario with Susan Joven and fashion plate Fe Rodriguez


PEPPER Teehankee, Ching Cruz, Agnes Huibonhua and Nuvo's French guest chef Xavier Tesh

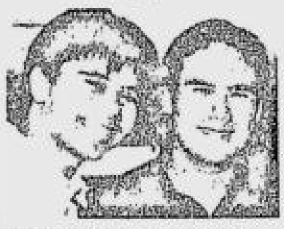

HSBC's first couple, Julie and Warner Manning; with Gina Tambunting and husband, businessman Pedro Roxas

JENNY Serrano and Becca Dosch


REP. Darlene Antonino Custodio and Monique Teodoro Gonzales

SM's Henry Sy Jr., Grace Glory Go, hostess Babot Joseph and Paulito Manglapus

LEO Prieto Jr.


BROTHERS Richard and Robi Joseph

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

IT'S THE NEWEST! IT'S THE greatest! It's the hottest!

And it's already creating a loud, loud buzz. The fashionable Serendra is becoming the new destination for Cosmo Manille's true gourmets and certified foodies where they can get their Thai food fix at the absolutely excellent Thai at Silk Restaurant in Serendra Promenade, Fort Bonifacio, *palanggas*.

Serving superbly prepared traditional favorites like the Phad Thai, Pakrai Oong, Tao-lu Pod Sam Rot or tossed brown tofu in sweet wine sauce, the restaurant is keeping tons of Thai food lovers craving for more, more, more!

The place is cozy and chic, with a predominantly white interior with pale green. The cool ambience of Thai at Silk will give everyone a great dining experience.

I missed the grand opening's ribbon-snipping by 10 minutes but ran into Silk's owner, the brilliant, talented and creative executive chef, **Cecille Chang Ysmael**, alongside her husband, king of the nightlife **Louie**, an institution in the industry himself.

The couple hosted cocktails for tons of their invitees and pals, who all came to support the Ysmaels' newest venture, dahlings. Thai at Silk partners are the gorgeous fashion plate **Ching Cruz**; interior design visionaries, sisters two **Ivy** and **Cynthia Almario**, the genius behind the chill-out, contemporary interiors, together with the super nice **Tanya Chua**; and stylish lady of the diplomatic set, **Agnes Huibonhua**, honorary consul of the Republic of Gambia. They were all present and accounted for.

Only Cecille, the genius behind the restaurant, could get away with her divine green and white chef's outfit. Together, the Ysmael couple welcomed Manille's A-listers: regal couple **Gina** and **Pedro Roxas**; **Greggy Araneta** going solo; **Ana** and **Vince Bitong**, with Fila's first couple **Butch** and **Cris Albert**; beautiful Ms with the 4 Bs, **Nikki Teodoro**; high-power tandem **Philip** and **Ching Cruz**; brilliant president of Weber Shandwick Worldwide **Mike Toledo**; man of all seasons, popular **Bonito Singson**, plus loads of other beautiful people who know what true Thai dining is all about.

The ribbon-snipping was led by Thailand's ambassador, Mme. **Asha Dvitiyananda**; Taguig City's handsome, boyish Mayor **Freddie Tinga**; vivacious **Letty Tan**; plus women of beauty and style **Maricris Zobel**, **Vicky Zubiri** and **Beng Dee**.

Expect Thai at Silk to become the chic after-hour crowd's favorite spot for chilling out, *palanggas*. The restaurant's ceramic bar and alfresco area are perfect for enjoying the excellent wine and bar selection, with their relaxing ambiance and smooth sounds.

Thai at Silk is at G/F Serendra Piazza, 26th St., Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. Call 8560386/87.

Check it out, *palanggas*.

Awesome

Free-spirited, dynamic man for all seasons **Ralph Lim Joseph** of the hard-to-beat Ralph's Wines and Spirits celebrated another fab year in his colorful life, *palanggas*.

Manille's creamiest of the cream, business magnates and namedroppable personas from the chic diplomatic row breezed in to toast the birthday celebrator at the picturesque Penthouse of Hyatt Regency Manila.

HOTSHOT ribbon-snippers: Beng Dee, stylish Maricris Zobel, Louie Ysmael, Letty Tan, Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga, Thai Ambassador Asha Dvitiyananda, Cecille Ysmael and Vicky Zubiri

Ralph J. personally selected the tons of wines and spirits that perfectly matched the food and mood of his bash. Waiters uncorked some of the best from Ralph's cellar like the Herradura Tequila, Fond de Cave, Mont Gras, Kremlyovskaya Vodka, Absolut Vodka, Stolichnaya Elite, Montes Alpha, my favorite bubbly Veuve Clicquot Champagne, Jacobs Creek Sparkling and the ever reliable Johnnie Walker Black, Swing and Chivas Regal that definitely kept everyone in high spirits throughout the night, dahlings.

The excellent to-die-for Lebanese delights, prepared by Hyatt Regency's executive chef, talented **Martin Bracker**, had loads of the chi-chi set going back for seconds. *Moi* noticed one invitee taking home several doggy bags with the permission of the celebrator, *natch*.

In the end, all agreed it was one celebration they truly and fully enjoyed. We raise our glasses for an awesome party well done, and for the celebrator extraordinaire, Ralph Joseph, but who else?

Cheers, *palangga*.

Leaders' summit

First Life top honcho **Peter Coyiuto** hosted the Leadership Summit. Business magnates, the company's workasonic lady agents, and executives of Filipino companies of iconic stature and our town's social set were all accounted for at this awesome, glitzy happening, dahlings.

The summit featured **Ernesto Tanmantiong**, hot, hot executive vice president of everyone's favorite Jollibee Foods Corp.; **Benson Dakay**, chief executive officer of Shemberg Corp.; and Dr. **Rolando Hortaleza**, chair and chief executive officer of Splash Corp.

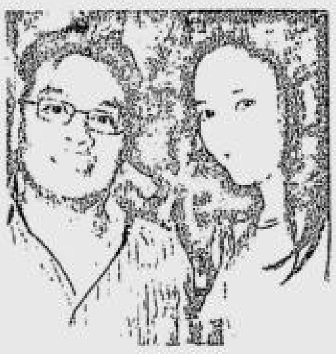
The evening revolved around leadership, best learned from experience. Awesome vanguards of business related how they achieved success. The idea was for First Life's agents to emulate the successful executives as they faced the challenges of selling life insurance, *palanggas*.

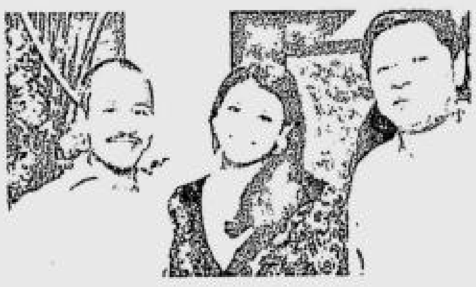
First Life sales leaders took center stage and were honored for their achievement with the Gawad Kagitingan award. Leading the pack were **Josie Gotohio** and **Lorna Lao**, first level; and **Patrick Cua**, third level.

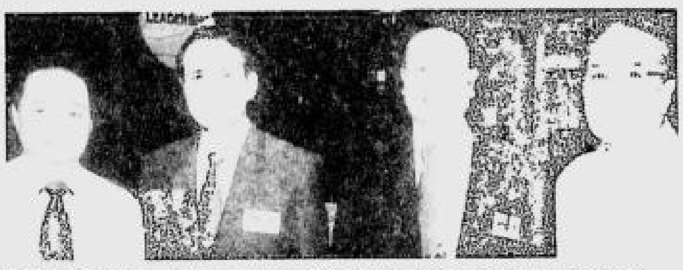
Top agents included **Ester Sy**, **Rosalie Aslon**, **Jackie Chua**, **Susan Tan**, **Wilson Lee Flores** and **Mary Ann Lee**.

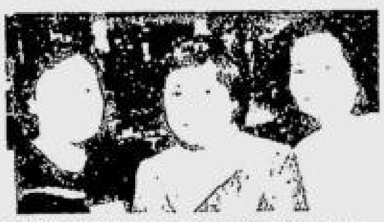
The gentleman of the hour, brilliant First Life president and chief executive officer Peter Coyiuto, said, *palanggas*, that the event was "a way of cultivating the Filipino spirit (to help) the country thrive economically."

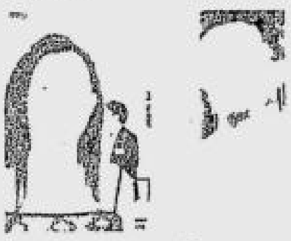
WOMEN of substance and style Angeline Tan and Pacita Almario


POPULAR couple Gil Aquino and gorgeous Mary Rose A.


RICKY Yupangco and his wow gal, Juana Manahan; and businessman Greggy Araneta


JOLLIBEE'S John Victor Tence, First Life's Jaime Santiago, Benson Dakay, and Liberty Flour Mills' William Carlos Uy


COYUITO women: Emeline Ocampo-Tan, Jane Cuyegkeng and Rosie Coyuito

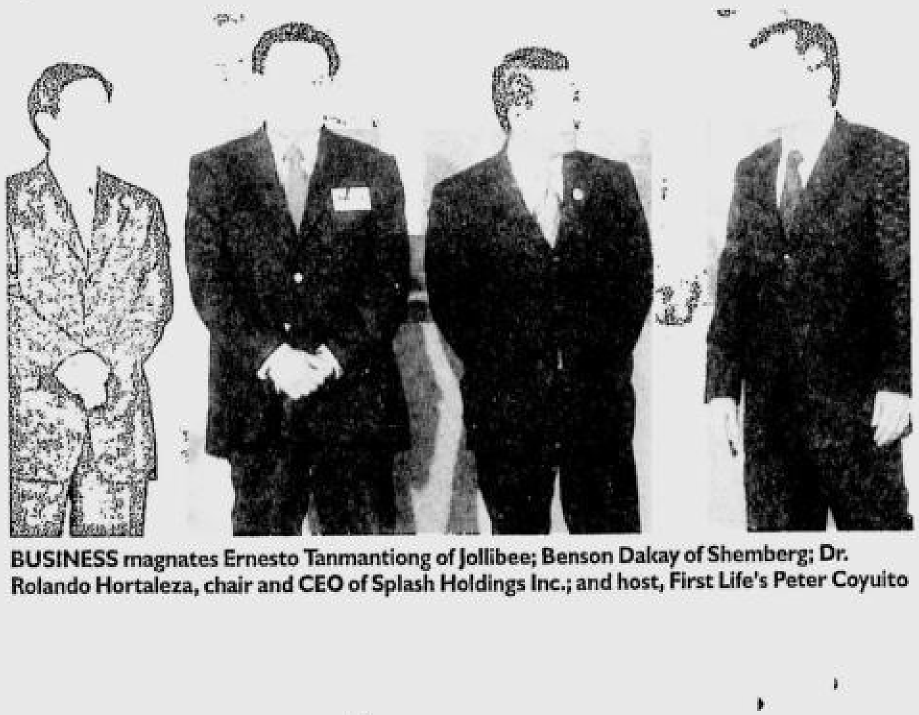

JOSIE Gotohio and Leo Cloma

AGRICULTURE Secretary Arthur Yap; Dr. Rolando Hortaleza, Tessie Perez, Dr. Rosalinda Ang-Hortaleza, Ma. Ralynn Fabian, and Susan Loyola

THE JOSEPHS: Brothers Robert, man of the hour Ralph, and Ronald, with their mother Florecita

POWER businessmen: Susing Pineda, Felicito "Tong" Payumo, Freddie Antonio, and Noel Oñate

ANNETTE Ablan, Col. Terry Cook and Greg La Marca


BUSINESS magnates Ernesto Tanmantiong of Jollibee; Benson Dakay of Shemberg; Dr. Rolando Hortaleza, chair and CEO of Splash Holdings Inc.; and host, First Life's Peter Coyuito

Filipino traditional massage. . .

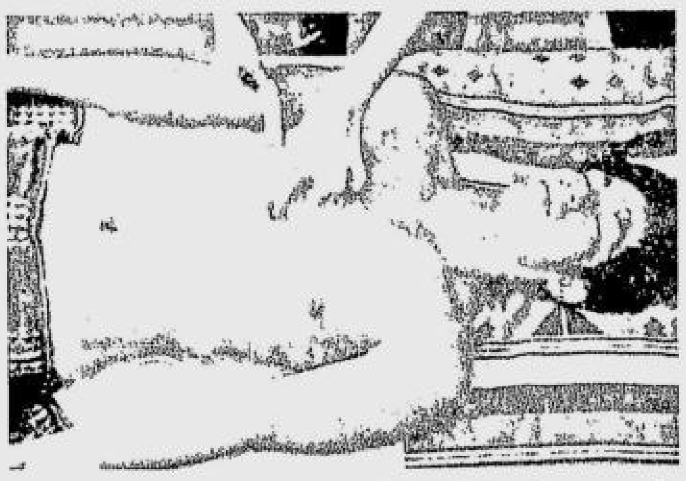
From page C1

in Nursing and Master of Arts in Nursing at the University of the Philippines. It was while working as a community health nurse and trainer in Leyte, Cavite, Davao, Cotabato and Agusan that she discovered the rich tradition of the *hilot* and the other modalities of ancient Filipino medicine.

The study and documentation of Filipino traditional medicine became her mission and passion. In 1980, she did a thesis entitled "A Comparison of the *Hilot* Pressure Points and Acupuncture Points." She also wrote manuals on acupressure, acupuncture, *ventosa*, medicinal fruits and vegetables and community health training.

Among the many topics covered in the book are the unique application of virgin coconut oil to *hilot* and the traditional methods for detecting bio-energy blockages.

The book offers advice on how to release tension, stress and biotoxins, the *hilot* way.



BANANA leaf strips are passed over areas to be massaged to identify energy blockages or excesses of wind or cold humors that need more focus.

HILOT **is unique because of its use of the virgin coconut oil rub and the banana leaf detection method. The *hilot* massage is also done on almost every area of the body.**

THE BANANA leaf strip is laced with virgin coconut oil.

TET Bachmann and daughters

A must-have for active kids

TET BACHMANN, 36, and mother of four, tries to make juggling family and work easy by choosing only the best products available.

The English teacher/licensed insurance agent and wife to Alaska Aces assistant coach Dicky, is particularly careful about products that will help protect her family's health.

Bachmann, who says she does not compromise when it comes to her family's health, says a hand gel is a must since kids handle all sorts of stuff in and outside the home.

In the house, hand-washing is the rule for Sabine, 10; Ciara, 7; Pia, 6; and Kyle, 4. But when they go outside, the kids are armed with wipes, tissues and hand gel.

Bachmann says she provides the kids Purell hand sanitizer to help reduce the risk illness. The product is especially handy when soap and water are not available. It also dries quickly without leaving a sticky feeling.

Purell Instant Hand Sanitizer is an alcohol-based product that provides an easy, effective, portable way to keep hands clean.

It kills 99.99 percent of the most common disease-causing germs.

Purell is exclusively available at Mercury Drug outlets.

Wake up to a fresh scent

AVOID MORNING breath by gargling with a mouthwash that will ensure a lasting, cool breath until the next morning.

Morning breath, which affects a lot of people, is that foul odor and bad taste in the mouth you have when you wake up. It may be caused by poor oral hygiene, diet, plaque buildup, dryness of the mouth and, in some cases, certain health conditions.

In most cases, it is caused by a buildup of VSC (volatile sulfur compounds). The compounds are the byproducts of bacteria in the mouth.

The bacteria thrive on small food particles stuck in the microscopic hairs of the tongue. The more food particles there are, the more VSCs they produce.

The new Astring-O-sol Ice Extreme is a mouthwash specifically designed to fight morning breath. It has a time-release anti-bacterial compound, Chlorhexidine, to fight morning breath.

New Astring-O-sol Ice Extreme's cool lemon lime flavor is available in 60ml, 120ml, 250ml and 360ml bottles.

Bawat patak, nagdadagdag lakas.

Nakikipatak kami sa pagpapasigla ng pangangatawan. Sa pamamagitan ng aming NutriBreak Feeding Program at ng Kineti-Kids! It's Fun to be Fit Program, nabibigyan ng dagdag na sustansya at kaalaman sa kalusugan ang mga mag-aaral ng mga paaralang kabilang sa mga programang ito.

The Coca-Cola Company
bawat patak, mahalaga™

For more information log on to www.bawatpatakmahalaga.com.ph

Are you fit or healthy?

Your body tells you when something is out of balance so be alert, observant and act promptly

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

THERE ONCE WAS A MAN WHO WANTED to win a marathon.

After a long bout with illness, he promised himself he would never neglect his health again. While recovering from a mysterious illness that made him lose weight excessively, down to 67 pounds, he realized he had allowed his health to deteriorate rapidly.

Embarking on a journey of discovery, he went on to run and, eventually, win the New York City marathon.

But was he pleased with the victory? Yes, but he also found the answer to a question that always nagged him. If you are fit, are you also healthy?

The marathon winner, Dr. Philip Maffeton, writes about the answer in his book "In Fitness and in Health."

He explains the difference: "Fitness [is the] ability to perform physical activity. Health [is] the optimal balance of all systems of the body—nervous, muscular, skeletal, circulatory, digestive, lymphatic, hormonal, mental, emotional and all other systems."

Most people believe if you are fit, you are automatically healthy. This is not so. You can look fit but may be unhealthy.

"Fitness and health, though many think the terms are interchangeable, are actually two different but mutually dependent states."

To achieve "optimal human performance," one needs a balance of fitness and health. This is a cycle that virtually has no end. Because optimum health is a process, there is a constant improvement with each stage of one's regimen.

Eat for energy

There are only two sources of energy—carbohydrates and fat. Carbo includes bread, rice, pasta, fruit/fruit juice, cereal, sugar. Fats mean oils, butter, high-fat cheeses, egg yolk, etc.

Caution to dieters

If your diet is high-protein and low-carbohydrate, stop wondering why you have little energy left at the end of the day. While protein can be the source of 15 percent of your energy requirements, it is not enough. Therefore, you are depriving yourself.

Note: If your energy comes primarily from sugar, you will experience fatigue.

Preventing disease

Before any disease can occur, there are symptoms of what is called a functional illness. Example: A woman passed all her tests while having her executive checkup.

And yet, she asked the doctor, "If I am healthy, then why do I feel sick?" Her migraine refused to go away, her knees felt weak, the skin was sallow and she had no energy.

Note: All symptoms of a functional illness are warning signals of impending disease. So don't be surprised to hear the doctor tell you one day "you are gravely ill."

Maffeton says your body always tells you when something is going out of balance. Thus, the advise is: Be alert, observant and act immediately.

Racing toward illness or health?

You need not be a marathoner to enter a race. Life is a constant race—the pressure to get from one destination to the next, the rush-hour commute to work, race through meals, career race to the top...

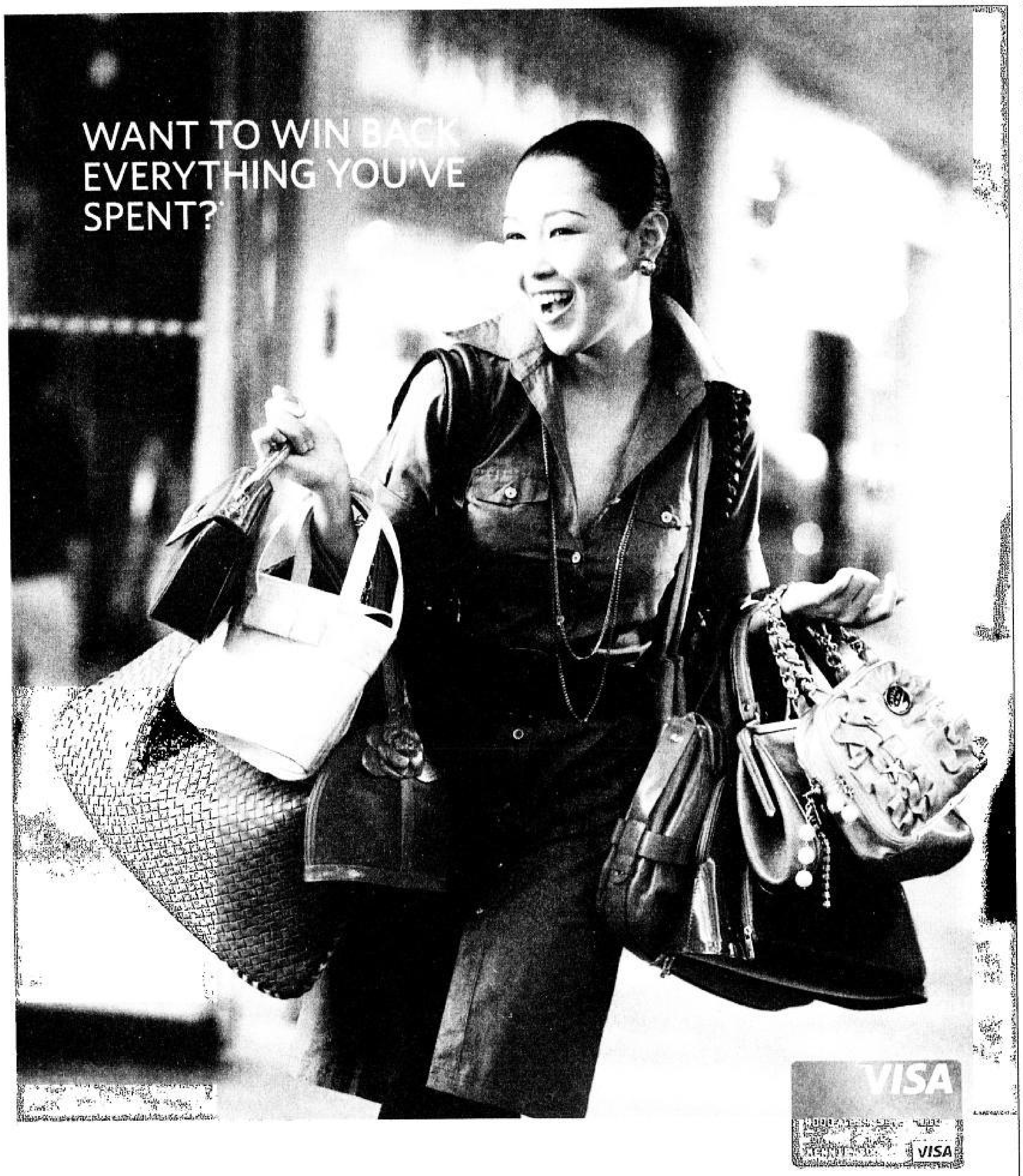
So, if life is a race, will you endure to the very end or will you suffer?

Do:

- Make a lifestyle decision, adopt changes that are needed.
- Find a highly nutritious diet. Abandon quick fixes and instant crash diets.
- Practice moderation.
- Design your own new, individual health regimen (ask a health expert to guide you).
- Believe that what you are doing is good for you.

Your affirmation

"I will win the race."
Love and light!


WANT TO WIN BACK EVERYTHING YOU'VE SPENT?*
VISA
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Visa's Great Rebate pays you back all your 2006 Visa purchases.

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  b. First 6 digits of the account number
  c. Last 4 digits of the account number
  d. Amount of transaction
  e. Date of transaction
  f. Time of transaction (24-hour format)
  Ex. VISA Mennie So, 400000, 1234, 1000.25 ,111206, 1808
Visa transactions may also be registered through the Promo website. (www.hblmasia.com/visa)
Draws will be conducted bi-weekly starting November 21, 2006 (total of 6 winners).
Promo period: November 12, 2006 - January 30, 2007

Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 4136. Series of 2006. See posters for details
*Visa purchases from January 1, 2006 up to a day before the draw date or December 31, 2006, whichever comes first, or up to a maximum of P500,000 net of withholding tax.

VISA
All it takes.

Patient compliance with treatment promotes cure

HEART DISEASE IS THE NO. 1 KILLER IN the Philippines.

Statistics show cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), mainly heart attack and stroke, kill over 16 million people worldwide, some 30 percent of the total number of deaths each year.

Hundreds of millions more, often people in the prime of their lives, become disabled.

A 2005 study showed that a heart attack can cost a patient an average of P90,655.43 for a period of 7.7 days of hospitalization and P166,754.40 for 11.9 days of hospitalization due to stroke.

For people at risk of CVD, lifestyle changes are needed for prevention and treatment. Major risk factors like high blood pressure, smoking, consumption of food high in saturated fat, elevated blood cholesterol, lack of physical activity, obesity and diabetes should be avoided.

The next step is taking the necessary medication. But doctors expressed concern that patients were often not diligent in taking their medication.

Vincent Valencia, a cardiologist and professor of medicine at the Heart Institute of St. Luke's Hospital, said patient compliance was crucial to successful treatment. Even the best treatment plan or most effective medicine would fail without the patient's cooperation.

Though pharmaceutical companies are coming up with once-a-day medications, Valencia said doctors needed to teach patients about the need to follow their medication schedule.

He said doctors should explain that while the cost of a prescribed medicine might be high, non- or partial compliance with a treatment regimen could lead to greater expense as complications might arise.

Pfizer medical director Dr. Anthony Leachon said the pharmaceutical industry recognized the need to provide adequate support for patients.

Pfizer, for one, launched its patient care program, providing literature and discounts for high blood pressure and some heart disease-related drugs like Amlodipine Besylate and Atorvastatin Calcium.

Pfizer's Sulit Card program gives patients a 50-percent discount on Amlodipine Besylate. The program also provides health information and reminders to promote adherence.

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100 mg/5 mL Syrup
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NEW PROTECTION FOR KIDS
Clusivol extends its "Bawal Magkasakit" campaign to children. The new Vitamin C supplement for kids, Clusivol Power C, aims to help parents provide their children the protection they need against diseases. Each dose of Clusivol Power C contains 100 mg of ascorbic acid that gives kids 100 percent Vitamin C. It helps the body resist infection by strengthening the immune system. The new product comes in a child-friendly flavored syrup. It is available at P55 per 60-ml bottle. Clusivol Power C is available in leading drugstores nationwide.

LIFESTYLE

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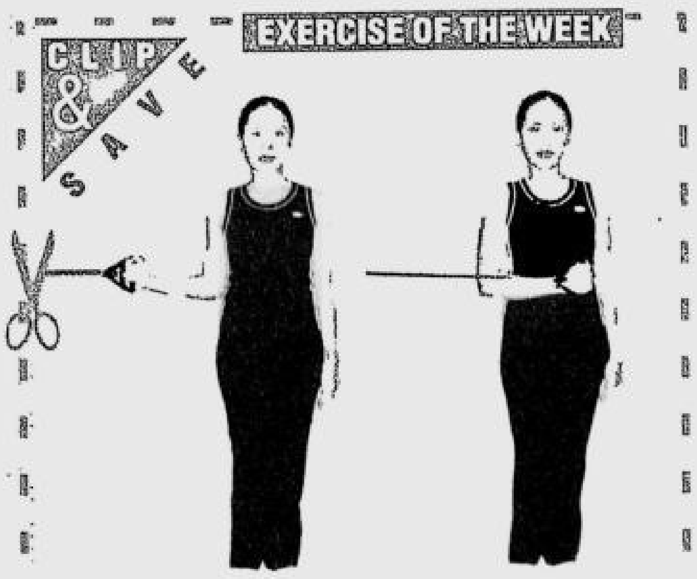
Text us your feedback:
Inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Internal rotator cuff with rubber band

THIS EXERCISE IS A MUST for anyone who plays a sport that requires repeated overhead movements like tennis, basketball, golf or swimming. It is also beneficial to people who have experienced shoulder injuries in the past. It strengthens the internal rotator muscles of the "rotator cuff," a group of four muscles that encircle the shoulder joint like a cuff.

Equipment:

You can use brand name exercise rubber bands or homemade exercise rubber bands. Surgical tubing can be bought at drugstores. Rubber bands for slingshots can be bought at hardware stores.

Exercise technique:

1. The rubber band should be hooked around a post, tied around a locked doorknob or held by a partner on your left side.

2. Hold the rubber band with your left hand and your arm bent at a 90-degree angle.

3. Without moving any other part of your body, especially your elbow, move your arm toward your body.

4. Slowly return to starting position. Do the desired number of repetitions. Then switch to the other side.

Performance tips:

Use a light resistance even though you are used to lifting heavy weights for your shoulders. The rotator cuff muscles are small.

Keep your torso steady and don't move your elbow as you bring your hand away from your body.

Keep your legs shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent if you feel you need more stability.

Repetitions:

You only need one set of 12-15 repetitions.

Group exercise: the good, the bad and the ugly

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

WHEN JACKIE SORENSEN created the first aerobics class in 1969, she had no idea how big a phenomenon it would become.

Fast-forward 30-plus years. Aerobics is still alive and well, not in its original Jane Fonda form but in its current incarnation as "group exercise."

The term was created to encompass all forms of exercise taught in a group setting. Under this definition fall traditional aerobic dance, specialty dance exercise like belly dancing, Latin and hip hop; yoga, Pilates, tai chi, athletic training and group strength training—basically anything taught by an instructor to a group.

Humans are social animals. The female of the species is even more of a social creature. This probably explains why women make up the majority of group exercise classes, even those that are masculine-oriented like kickboxing and boot camp military-style classes.

For many women, it is simply more fun to work out together than alone.

Group exercise is an effective way to make working out a regular habit. You have to stick to a particular schedule so exercise becomes part of your daily routine. It is a time-efficient way to work out because you don't waste time talking while you exercise.

But strengths can also be weaknesses. Here are the good and bad points of group exercise:

Peer pressure

At its best, peer pressure makes you drag your tail to class even when you don't feel like it. It inspires you to keep up with your classmates when you feel like quitting. But, at its worst, it can lead to injury if you try to follow what everyone else is doing even if it hurts.

I once had a twentysomething client who almost fainted in class because of peer pressure. The classmate she was trying to keep up with? A fit 70-year-old woman. Her pride just wouldn't let her accept that this "old lady" was in better shape than her.

After that experience, she threw in the towel and exercised at her own pace.

Many yoga injuries are caused by participants "forcing" themselves to do advanced poses they are not ready for. This could be due to an inborn competitive spirit or embarrassment at not being at par with others.

Familiarity

Just like in the TV show "Cheers," it can be comforting to work out in a group where everyone knows your name. The time before and after the class is spent in pleasant conversation.

But not everyone enjoys this. I know someone who actually likes the anonymity of a class where she doesn't know a soul because everyone is outside her social circle.

When class participants are civil to one another, it is a delight to exercise. When they are nasty and *mataray*, it is the opposite.

A friend was enrolled in a large gym where the students would growl at her if she took their spot even if she came ahead of them and would hog all the equipment claiming they reserved for their friends.

She said she quit because it was too stressful. Instead of looking forward to exercising, she was dreading it.

Territorial

Women are territorial beings. When someone else takes a spot they are used to, they feel disoriented. This is a normal feeling.

If they are polite, they don't make a fuss and remind themselves to come earlier. But if they are prima donnas, some very unfeminine behavior can occur like tapping the person on the shoulder and haughtily saying, "Move, this is my spot."

If the "intruder" is timid, she submissively moves to another place and an uneasy peace ensues. But, if she stands up for her rights, a word war can easily begin that can lead to future cold stares and looks that could kill.

They say women are gentle and peace-loving but let me tell you that, when they are together in a group, mob mentality takes over and they can be downright aggressive.

Class size

There is a palpable energy in the air when people exercise together to the beat of music. It is definitely more exciting when there are more people than when there are very few. But large classes are not safe.

Ideally, a class shouldn't have more than 15 participants. Unless there are three teachers, safety is compromised when there are 30 to 50 people in a class, which can happen in mega-gyms. There is no way one teacher can keep an eye on all students.

An acquaintance fell off her bench and fractured her wrist in a very large step class but the teacher didn't even notice something was wrong because my friend was in the back of the room.

Instructors

One size does not fit all. The teacher should know how to modify the exercises. This means she should know how to give several variations of the same exercise to fit the special needs of students like those who have knee or back issues. Otherwise, beginners may get intimidated and never join again. Or they may get injured trying to follow.

Make your own class

Ask around for instructors (most are freelance professionals) who can teach a class in your office after work (very convenient) or at home with friends and neighbors. Studies have shown that the more socially cohesive a group, the longer its participants will exercise together.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

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Your Avant-Garde,

Hospital-based aesthethic surgery hub at its best

By Piccolo Lualhati

Aesthetic surgery is a surgical specialty involved in enhancing the face and body of individuals who are considered normal

The Philippines has been growing as a tourist destination not only as a top choice among vacationing families but also for health and beauty conscious foreign visitors notably because of its world-class physicians, modern technology, and uniquely way of Filipino caring and compassion at great values for money at a fraction of the cost in developing countries.

In the forefront of promoting the thriving medical tourism in the country, the Manila Doctors Hospital (MDH) opens today its very own Aesthetic Surgery Center.

"The current trends in the global market shows that reconsructive surgery is an expectation of patients. In response to this need, we are opening the top-of-the-line services, systems and procedures of the center for the Hospital to fully help in the government's medical tourism thrust to welcome visitors all over the world to go to the Philippines for their health and wellness needs," MDH president Aniceto M. Sobrepena said.

In perfect time to the Hospital's 50th founding celebration on Friday, the new facility highlights MDH's five decades of providing quality health care services not only in the country but the world over as well.

"This (the clinic's inauguration) is an exacting and exciting time for the 50th anniversary of Manila Doctors. The Aesthetic Surgery Center not only opens the Hospital's door to the general Filipino patrons but also to foreign visitors as well who are keeping an eye to the Philippines as a top choice for their health and wellness needs. From a number of services it offers, it will not only maximize the expertise of the doctors but also help promote the thriving medical tourism in the country," said Dr. Florencio Q. Lucero, whose appointment as the head of the center reunites him with the MDH after having been working in another hospital for the last 10 years.

World-class services, modern facilities

A high-end aesthetic center of its kind, the MDH Aesthetic Surgery Center provides restorative solutions in health, beauty, and wellness needs of the patients. It likewise gives them access to quality support services and products to become more functional in society.

Nestled at the ground floor of the Hospital's Dona Salustiana Medical Tower, the Center houses one operating room for minor surgical procedures and two consultation rooms. The various reconstructive services - either surgical or therapeutic - to be availed inside the Center include burns and scars, pathological changes of the connective tissues, firbosis or scar modulation, trauma reconstructive surgery, congenital defect surgery, umbilical abdominoplasty and skin grafting. The wellness component includes facial enhancement (eyelids and eyebag, eyelid folds, noselift, nose trimming, nose reduction) and facial rejuvenation (surgical, minimally invasive and non-surgical). Complicated surgical procedures, on the other hand, such as breast augmentation, breast implant and liposuction are done in the major operating rooms located in the main building.

Unlike its contemporaries, MDH Aesthetic Surgery Center is hospital-based, which according to Dr. Lucero, "is its edge over the other facilities of its kind because it has the full-complement of other specialties, instrumentations as well as diagnostic and support equipment that are a requirement in the event of any eventuality that may arise during the operation."

Among the advanced and high-quality technologies the Hospital's beauty and wellness center is equipped with are the anesthesia machines, monitoring and resuscitation devices - all indicating that the Center is at par with modern aesthetic facilities abroad.

Mindful of the fact that any surgical procedure is always at risk of bleeding, infection, loss of tissue, adverse reaction to medicines administered and other complications, the Center adheres well to the ISO certification of MDH to ensure that sterility, wound infection and other precautionary measures are of global standard.

In good hands

On top of the amenities, techonologies and services, the Hospital's aesthetic facility boasts of its cream of the crop surgeons.

Speaking in behalf of the other four surgeons tapped to help him man the aesthetic clinic, Dr. Lucero said, "They are all highly credentialed and diplomates of the Philippine Board of Plastic Surgery that make them competitive with sought-after plastic surgeons in the land. With their vast experiences and high credibility, patients are guaranteed to get the correct and safe plastic surgery procedures from them."

Affordable rates

A high-end yet "pocket-friendly" beauty and wellness center it is, the facility offers competitive and standardized pricing scheme for every procedure, including reasonable professional fees of the surgeons.

"Because MDH is not just mainly concerned with earning profits, but also of bringing its quality health care service to everybody, we are offering the services of the Center at a very competitive and standardized price," Dr. Lucero stressed.

"With this, we are widening the market reach of the clinic not only to affluent customers of the usual aesthetic center but also to middle-income earners, specifically the repatriating Overseas Filipino Workers who hardly toil abroad to save not only for their family but also to afford such wellness and beauty procedures for themselves," added the head of MDH newly-established aesthetic facility.

With the schemed rates, the social statuses of the aesthetic clinic's market are upper classes A and B as well as middle class C.

Accessibility

Strategically located at the heart of Manila, the ISO certified hospital has long enjoyed patronage from foreigners, as well as balikbayans, who come to seek assistance regarding health concerns. Guests have found Manila Doctors Hospital to be an ideal place not only because of its excellent doctors and world class service but also due to the amenities the surrounding area provides.

MDH is thirty minutes away from the airport, via Roxas Blvd. Right beside MDH is a hotel, just one of the thirty hotel establishments, within a 3 kilometer radius, that may provide entertainment, such as casinos and fine dining. A huge shopping mall, a block away from MDH, houses food establishments, cinemas, recreational facilities and supermarkets that may provide basic needs of foreigners, as well as local guests. The US Embassy is also located just down UN Avenue.

Breaking the stigma, boosting self-image

Apart from promoting beauty and wellness care, MDH Aesthetic Surgery Center also aims to break the perennial social stigma on undergoing aesthetic surgery.

"Since time immemorial, there has been a sign of social unacceptability attached to aesthetic surgery. That whenever a person goes under a knife, he or she is perceived by others with physical deformities or abnormalities," Dr. Lucero explained. "Hence, there are those who forego their plan to undergo a surgical operation - even if they really need and have the means to do it - for fear of rejection."

With the newly-opened facility, the Hospital is trying to correct such a stigma by educating the public that aesthetic surgery is a surgical specialty involved in enhancing the face and body of individuals who are considered normal.

"Here, we are working with the normal anatomy and only enhancing the physical features. We are trying our best to imply to the public that for every patient that comes in to an aesthetic center like ours is healthy. They are doing this beyond the fact that their faces or bodies need it, but rather to look younger and better, restore their youth, and improve their self-confidence, which are all important in their overall career and self- image," Dr. Lucero stressed.

Good reception

With the increasing global consciousness on aesthetic surgery, the Hospital expects for an overwhelming response from the public, both local and foreign patrons, to its newly-launched Aesthetic Surgery Center.

"As always, newly-opened specialty clinics like beauty and wellness facility excites the public. Hence, we are positive to see astonishing reception from the public to our very own aesthetic center," Dr. Lucero said.

While there is a foreseen wide acknowledgment to the Center, the Hospital management still looks forward to catering to the niche market of aesthetic surgery in the long run, to play a pivotal role in the intensive medical tourism campaign of the government.

"Amid our expectation on the initial success of the Center on its opening today, we are hoping to sustain it in the long run. In so doing, we will continue provide world-class facilities, high-quality services and best credentialed surgeons and staff to the Center, which the paying customers can count on to have high standards and safe surgical procedures here. These, we deem, not only beneficial on our part but to the medical tourism drive of the government as well," MDH president Sobrepena said.

For inquiries, call Manila Doctors Hospital at 5243011 ext. 8159.

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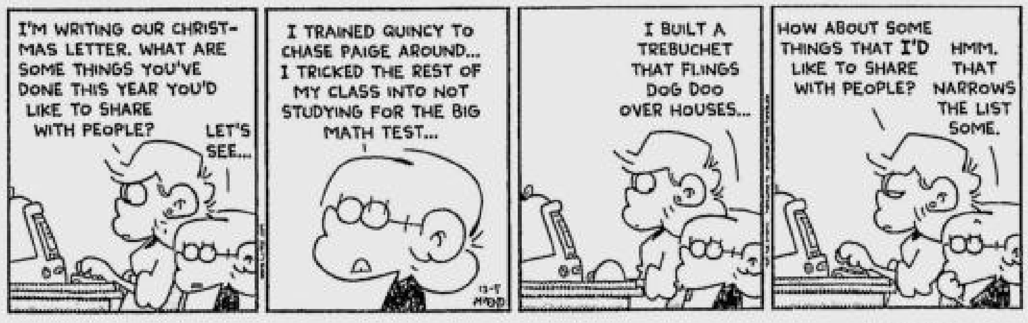
e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

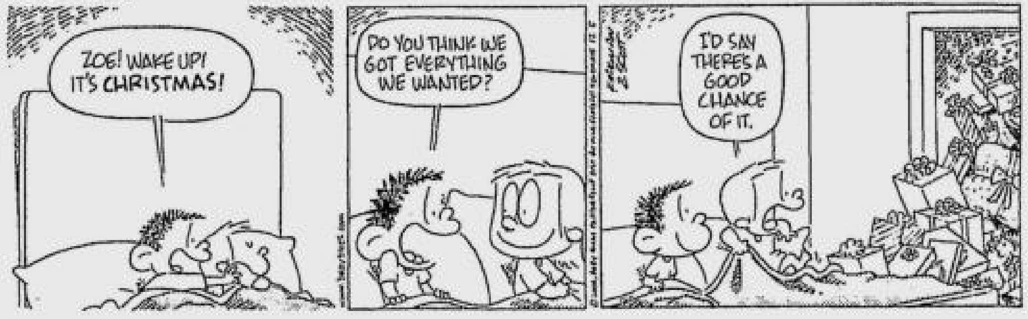
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I'M WRITING OUR CHRISTMAS LETTER. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU'VE DONE THIS YEAR YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH PEOPLE?
LET'S SEE...
I TRAINED QUINCY TO CHASE PAIGE AROUND... I TRICKED THE REST OF MY CLASS INTO NOT STUDYING FOR THE BIG MATH TEST...
I BUILT A TREBUCHET THAT FLINGS DOG DOO OVER HOUSES...
HOW ABOUT SOME THINGS THAT I'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH PEOPLE?
HMM. THAT NARROWS THE LIST SOME.

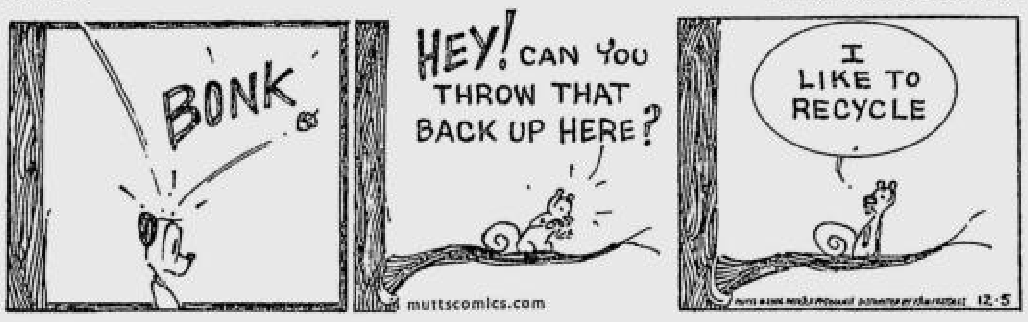
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE! WAKE UP! IT'S CHRISTMAS!
DO YOU THINK WE GOT EVERYTHING WE WANTED?
I'D SAY THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE OF IT.

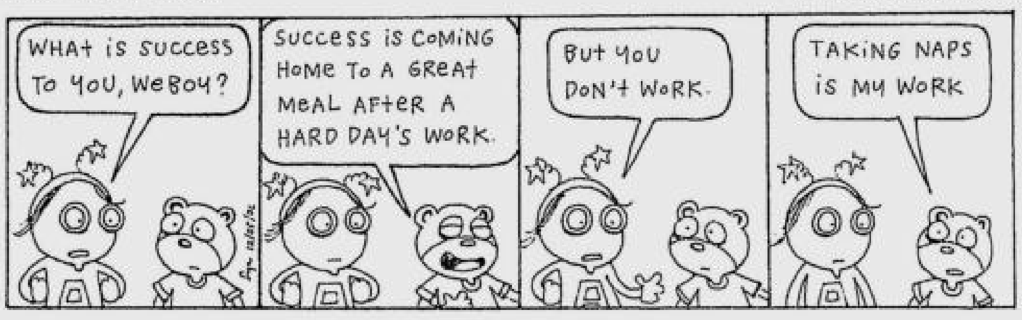
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


BONK
HEY! CAN YOU THROW THAT BACK UP HERE?
I LIKE TO RECYCLE
muttscomics.com
12-5

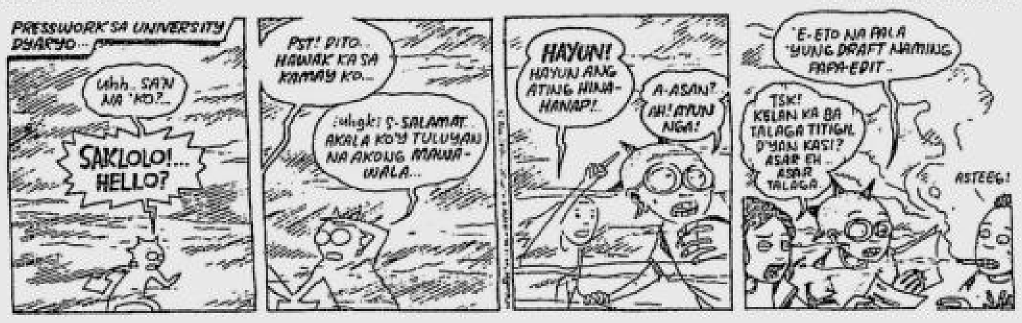
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHAT IS SUCCESS TO YOU, WEBOY?
SUCCESS IS COMING HOME TO A GREAT MEAL AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK.
BUT YOU DON'T WORK.
TAKING NAPS IS MY WORK

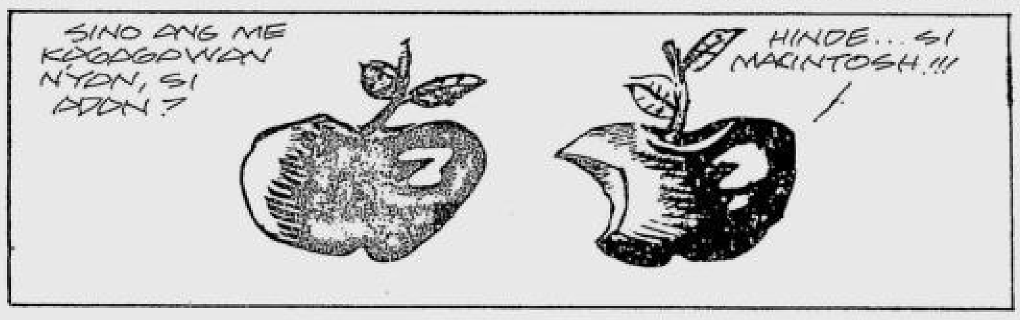
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


PRESSWORK SA UNIVERSITY DYARYO...
Uhh.. SA'N NA 'KO?..
SAKLOLO!... HELLO?
PST! DITO.. HAWAK KA SA KAMAY KO...
ubgk! S-SALAMAT. AKALA KO'Y TULUYAN NA AKONG MAWAWALA...
HAYUN! HAYUN ANG ATING HINAHANAP!..
A-ASAN?.. AH! AYUN NGA!
E-ETO NA PALA 'YUNG DRAFT NAMING PAPA-EDIT..
TSK! KELAN KA BA TALAGA TITIGIL D'YAN KASI? ASAR EH.. ASAR TALAGA
ASTEEG!

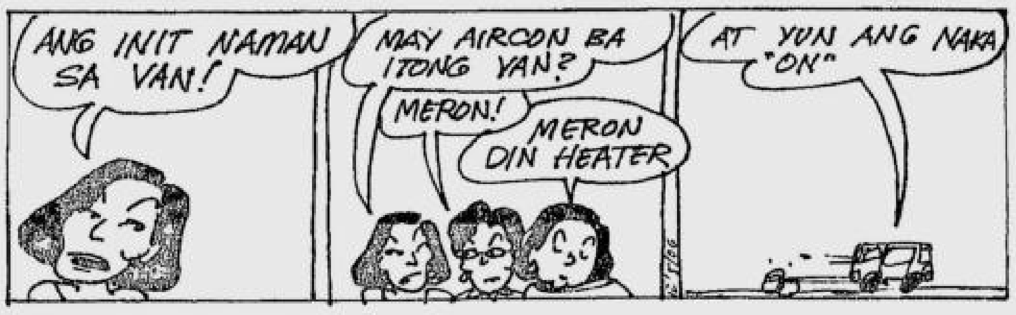
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SINO ANG ME KAGAGAWAN NYON, SI ADAN?
HINDE... SI MAKINTOSH!!!

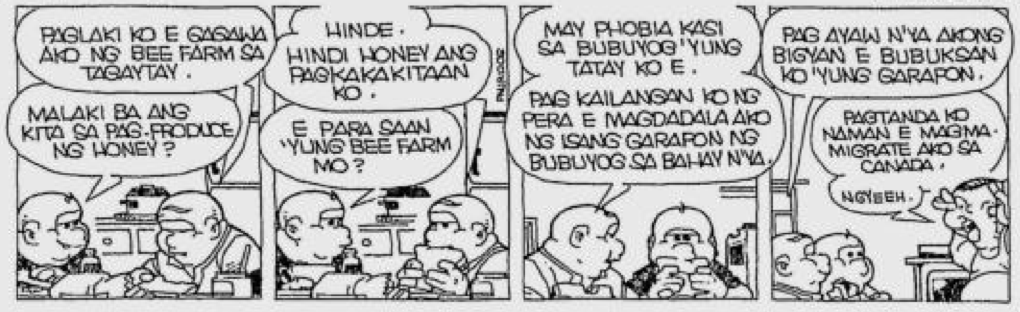
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG INIT NAMAN SA VAN!
MAY AIRCON BA ITONG VAN?
MERON!
MERON DIN HEATER
AT YUN ANG NAKA "ON"

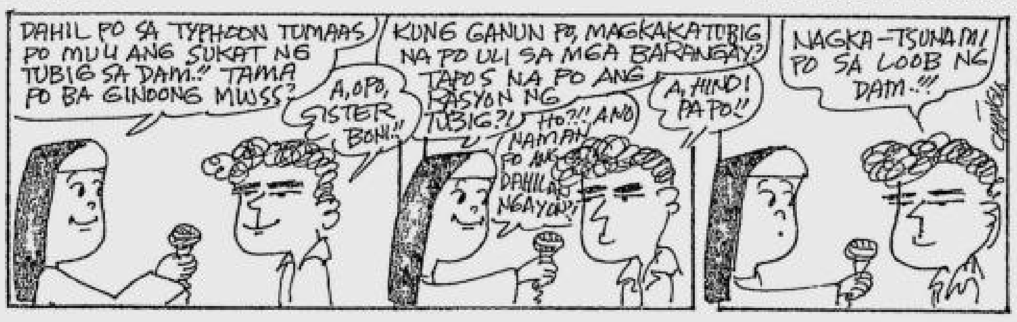
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PAGLAKI KO E GAGAWA AKO NG BEE FARM SA TAGAYTAY.
MALAKI BA ANG KITA SA PAG-PRODUCE NG HONEY?
HINDE. HINDI HONEY ANG PAGKAKAKITAAN KO.
E PARA SAAN 'YUNG BEE FARM MO?
MAY PHOBIA KASI SA BUBUYOG 'YUNG TATAY KO E.
PAG KAILANGAN KO NG PERA E MAGDADALA AKO NG ISANG GARAPON NG BUBUYOG SA BAHAY N'YA.
PAG AYAW N'YA AKONG BIGYAN E BUBUKSAN KO 'YUNG GARAPON.
PAGTANDA KO NAMAN E MAGMAMIGRATE AKO SA CANADA.
NGYEEH.

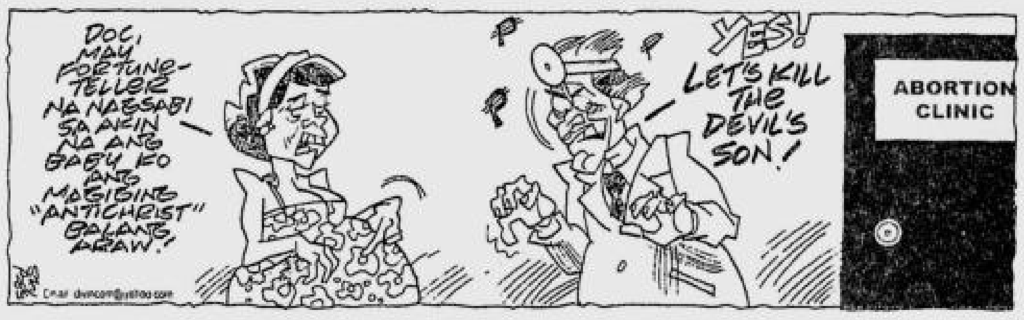
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DAHIL PO SA TYPHOON TUMAAS PO MULI ANG SUKAT NG TUBIG SA DAM!! TAMA PO BA GINOONG MUSS?
A, OPO, SISTER BONI!!
KUNG GANUN PO, MAGKAKATUBIG NA PO ULI SA MGA BARANGAY? TAPOS NA PO ANG RASYON NG TUBIG?!
HO?!! ANO NAMAN PO ANG DAHILAN NGAYON?!
A, HINDI PA PO!!
NAGKA-TSUNAMI PO SA LOOB NG DAM!!!

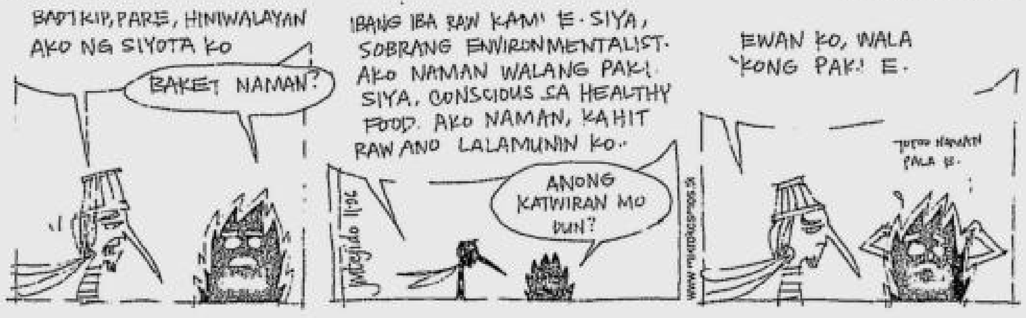
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DOC, MAY FORTUNE-TELLER NA NAGSABI SA AKIN NA ANG BABY KO ANG MAGIGING "ANTICHRIST" BALANG ARAW.
YES!
LET'S KILL THE DEVIL'S SON!
ABORTION CLINIC
E-mail: divincom@yahoo.com

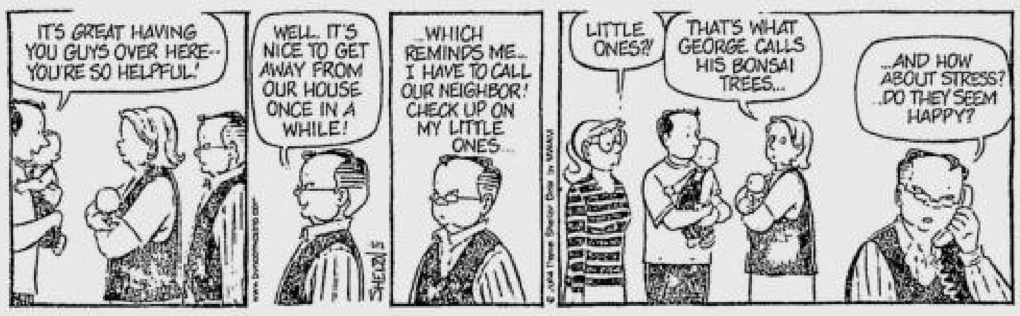
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BAD TRIP, PARE, HINIWALAYAN AKO NG SIYOTA KO
BAKET NAMAN?
IBANG IBA RAW KAMI E. SIYA, SOBRANG ENVIRONMENTALIST. AKO NAMAN WALANG PAKI. SIYA, CONSCIOUS SA HEALTHY FOOD. AKO NAMAN, KAHIT RAW ANO LALAMUNIN KO..
ANONG KATWIRAN MO DUN?
EWAN KO, WALA 'KONG PAKI E.
TOTOO NAMAN PALA 'YO.

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


IT'S GREAT HAVING YOU GUYS OVER HERE... YOU'RE SO HELPFUL!
WELL, IT'S NICE TO GET AWAY FROM OUR HOUSE ONCE IN A WHILE!
...WHICH REMINDS ME... I HAVE TO CALL OUR NEIGHBOR! CHECK UP ON MY LITTLE ONES...
LITTLE ONES?!
THAT'S WHAT GEORGE CALLS HIS BONSAI TREES...
...AND HOW ABOUT STRESS? ...DO THEY SEEM HAPPY?

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Smoke curl
5 Top point
9 Yielder
14 Head light bulb?
15 Gravy server
16 Protein acid
17 Walk out on
20 Day play
21 Letter from St. Paul
22 Beside
23 Stumble
24 Vigorous enjoyment
27 Little angel
32 Silvery-gray
35 Roller coaster thrills
37 Seating section
38 Run out on
42 Lots and lots
43 That plural
44 Set aflame
45 Born first
48 Jots
50 Shelves in fireplaces
52 Close the city gate again
56 Paint solvent
60 Heart contraction
62 Give up on
64 Pooh's creator
65 Neatol
66 Pull the trigger
67 Look of contempt
68 Long, mournful cry
69 Gala gathering

DOWN

1 Olympian Rudolph
2 Just perfect
3 Pac. pact
4 Laying asphalt
5 Irish Rose's lover
6 Traffic diverter
7 Tumbling cushion
8 Obsolete anesthetic
9 Old-time Islamic leader
10 Australian birds
11 Malicious gossip
12 SASE, e.g.
13 Ludwig Mies van der ___
18 Totally swamp
19 Larger-than-life story
23 Challenging phrase
25 Jack of "Barney Miller"
26 Wrongful act
28 Whitney or Wallach
29 Wallpaper unit
30 Citrus hybrid
31 Second to none
32 Wistful phrase
33 Stamp of authority
34 Bridge holding
36 Buzz off!
39 Color changer
40 Ballpark fig.
41 Real-life model for "Citizen Kane"
46 Baby party
47 Braxton or Tennille
49 Began a trip
51 Long-time Cincinnati catcher
53 Alamo figure
54 At the ready
55 CSA general
56 $ dispensers
57 Vandyke location
58 Perry's penner
59 Language subtlety
60 Finish third
61 Whoop
63 As well

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14				■	15				■	16				
17				18					19					
20							■	21						
22					■	■	23				■	■	■	■
■	■	■	24		25	26		■	27		28	29	30	31
32	33	34	■	35				36	■	■	37			
38			39						40	41				
42				■	■	43					■	44		
45				46	47	■	48				49	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	50		51		■	■	52		53	54	55
56	57	58	59				■	60	61					
62							63							
64					■	65				■	66			
67					■	68				■	69			

By Gordon Seaberg
Los Angeles, CA
12/5/06

Monday's Puzzle Solved

C	H	A	P	■	A	S	P	S	■	J	C	R	E	W
L	O	N	E	■	S	H	A	H	■	O	P	I	N	E
A	O	K	S	■	N	O	V	A	■	E	A	G	L	E
W	H	A	T	M	E	W	O	R	R	Y	■	■	■	■
E	A	R	■	A	R	E	■	P	O	S	T	M	A	N
D	H	A	B	I	■	R	T	E	S	■	R	A	N	I
■	■	■	A	T	S	E	A	■	T	E	U	T	O	N
■	A	L	F	R	E	D	E	N	E	U	M	A	N	■
H	E	I	F	E	R	■	B	E	R	R	A	■	■	■
A	R	A	L	■	E	R	O	O	■	E	N	D	E	D
S	O	M	E	O	N	E	■	N	I	K	■	E	L	I
■	■	■	■	M	A	D	M	A	G	A	Z	I	N	E
A	L	I	B	I	■	C	A	T	O	■	E	M	I	T
P	E	R	O	T	■	A	M	E	R	■	T	O	N	E
T	E	E	N	S	■	P	A	S	S	■	A	S	O	R

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12/5/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're unusually confident, bold and daring. Others love to be in your presence because life feels more exciting. Because you believe in a positive outcome, you get things done. You're active, dynamic, optimistic and quick to take charge. You believe in yourself. Get ready for a great year (this could be one of the best years of your life)!

Birthdate of: Frankie Muniz, actor; Gary Allan, singer; Little Richard, rock pioneer

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're hungry for adventure! If you're traveling or in school, this is a wonderful time for you, because you want to learn new things and have new experiences.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're totally focused on how to fairly share property or possessions that are jointly owned. (You're never casual about money, land and the things you own.) Oh, no!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): It's all about partnerships right now for your sign. These partnerships can be intimate or professional, or they might even be close friendships.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're getting ready to work hard now. In large measure, this is because you have a sincere desire to get better organized in your life. You want everything at the ready.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): What a great party month for you! Romance, love affairs, professional sports, playful times with children, the theater, the arts and fun vacations should be tops on your menu.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Home, family and real estate continue to be your major focus right now. Entertain at home. Invite the gang over. (It's a good excuse to clean up the place.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're very busy now—running errands, talking to everyone, taking short trips and just keeping up to speed. Don't stay at home. Get out and hustle.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): On the whole, you're a pretty money-savvy sign. Right now, you're coming up with all kinds of moneymaking ideas. Believe in yourself!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): It's been a long time since so many planets were in your sign. It's all about you now, dear Sagittarius. Enjoy the attention and the opportunities coming your way.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You need to work behind the scenes. You might even need more rest than usual. Play it low, in the key of C.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is an extremely popular time for you! Naturally, this pleases you because you enjoy schmoozing and networking (which you do so well!). Working with groups is enjoyable this month.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Actually, there are five planets at high noon in your chart. (This is most unusual.) Everyone notices you now! Make the most of this. Go after what you want, because bosses, parents and VIPs are unusually impressed with you now.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

	2	7	4					
								7
		4	9	7	3	8		1
		2				9		8
		5		1		7		
4		3				2		
8		6	5	9	1	4		
2								
					2	5	9	

Difficulty Level ★★

12/05

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	7	3	1	9	6	8	2	4
9	2	8	5	4	3	6	7	1
1	4	6	7	2	8	9	3	5
2	5	1	8	3	9	7	4	6
3	8	7	4	6	1	5	9	2
4	6	9	2	5	7	1	8	3
7	9	5	3	1	4	2	6	8
8	3	2	6	7	5	4	1	9
6	1	4	9	8	2	3	5	7

Difficulty Level ★

She wants to regain the ability to see deceased loved ones

INNER AWARENESS
Jaime T. Licauco

HERE'S AN INTERESTING LETTER from a Filipino healer and medium now living in the US relating her psychic experiences and healing work.

"I'm Sheila, living in Los Angeles, California. I learned about you from my cousin in the Philippines who took one of your workshops.

"I want you to know I really appreciate you for opening up the minds of others to their psychic abilities.

"I only wish I met you when I was five years old. I discovered my mediumship and psychic ability at a young age in the Philippines.

"My grandfather died before I was born. I only knew him through pictures. Called Ingkong, my grandfather decided to communicate with me, first by moving his eyes in his pictures, smiling at me and whispering in my ears.

"Finally, I actually saw his soul with my eyes! When that happened, I got so scared I decided to shut off my third eye. As a result, I no longer hear, see nor feel spirits around me. Now, I would love to have this ability to see deceased loved ones because I now understand I am here to help them commune with living relatives on earth.

"When are you going to have a workshop here in the US? I am visiting the Philippines in December and will be staying for one month. I will visit my home where I first discovered my psychic gifts, my father's home. I feel scared but, at the same time, I am willing and ready to open my heart and also my third eye to see deceased loved ones.

"If you have a workshop in December, I would like to attend it and have a session with you.

"Currently, I continue to do my own work, release what no longer serves me or what limits me, and I continue to learn and call on various teachers like Derek O'Neil, Doreen Virtue, our beloved Satya Sai Baba, Amm and many more."

Natural

Thank you for your kind words about my work.

You are a natural psychic and medium. You can regain your ability to see and communicate with spirits if you want to, but you should conquer your fears first.

I do not have any invitation yet to conduct a seminar in the US. But since you are coming back to the Philippines, you may want to attend my Inner Mind Development seminar Dec. 16-17. Call my office, 8107245 or 8926806 when you arrive in the Philippines for details.

I am not familiar with the names of the spiritual teachers you mentioned except that of Satya Sai Baba of India. I am glad to know you are a practitioner of various alternative healing modalities. I look forward to meeting you in December.

Help sought

Another overseas reader is asking for help about his current health problem. "I found your web page on the Internet," said Dejan Dejan. "I wonder if you can help me. I have asthma. It started with allergies and moved on to the next level. I am currently living in Vermont, USA."

If you were in the Philippines, I could refer you to several alternative and complementary health practitioners who might be able to help, but since you are living abroad, it is quite difficult.

Perhaps what I can only suggest is for you to read my book, "Exploring the Powers of Your Inner Mind," which contains a section on how to heal yourself using mental imagery or visualization.

In that book I describe step-by-step the correct procedure to heal yourself by using only the power of your inner mind. I mentioned several successful cases in that book, but there are a lot more in real life. Hope this helps.

Changing shape

Cherie Jung is asking for an explanation about an unusual incident that happened to a psychic friend of hers.

"I have a friend who can see ghosts but she has no formal training in this. She does not really want to see these things, but (they happen) unintentionally.

"For example, on Oct. 31 (All Saints' Day), while driving alone at around 6 p.m., she saw a building on the right side of the road bending like an inverted 'U,' blocking her path. She stopped the car, but the road and the building became normal again as if nothing happened.

"She told me she wasn't imagining it and she was in a normal, healthy condition at the time. I searched the Net for some explanation but couldn't find any. So I thought of you.

"Can you please enlighten me? Did something really happen? Why did it happen? What does it mean? Have you encountered a similar story before? (Could) her mind be simply playing tricks? What do you think?"

I cannot explain for sure why that happened, but since you said your friend could see spirits she is therefore a medium and a clairvoyant.

When spirits manifest to a psychic, s/he can see strange things that the spirits want him/her to see. So faces in pictures can suddenly smile or wink at him/her, buildings may begin to change shape and move forward or backward and the sun can appear to dance. These are all the work of spirits.

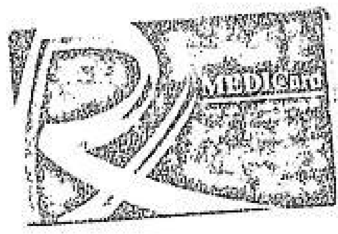
Why they chose to play that trick on her, I cannot tell. But Halloween has traditionally been laden with lots of stories of spirit intervention into human affairs because people's attention is focused on the spirit world.

MEDICard

Take Charge Doc!

What is Asthma and what triggers it?

Asthma is a chronic lung disease characterized by inflammation of the airways. The inflammation makes the passages smaller, making it more difficult for air to move in and out of the lung, causing symptoms such as cough, chest tightness, shortness of breath and wheezing. Asthma triggers include allergic rhinitis and exposure to allergens including dust mites, pollens, animal dander and cockroach droppings. Inflamed asthmatic airways are sensitive to environmental irritants such as cigarette smoke, strong perfumes, household cleaners, and car fumes. There is much evidence reporting increased incidence of asthma in children exposed to smoke. Viral infections like colds, changing weather conditions, changes in temperature and humidity, emotional anxiety, and gastroesophageal reflux can also aggravate asthma. Asthma Triggers may differ from person to person, therefore identifying and avoiding these triggers can help lessen the chance of having an asthma attack.



Dr. Michelle Joy De Vera provides us with this week's discussion on Asthma. Dr. De Vera, a medicine graduate of UP, took her residency training for pediatrics in 1999 and later had her sub-specialization in Allergy and Immunology at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, and also a diplomate of the Philippine Pediatric Society and the Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. Despite being active in her profession, Dr. De Vera still finds time doing her hobbies like running, biking and mountain climbing. She also likes discovering new restaurants and cafes around the metro. MEDICard members may visit her for consultations at St. Luke's Medical Center during Monday 9 am to 12 noon or at The Medical City during Tuesday and Wednesday 2pm to 7pm and during Friday 10am to 6pm.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

'Bank' represents new life-saving technique

A CORD BLOOD BANK, REPORTedly comparable to the best in the US, Japan and Korea, has opened in the Philippines.

CordLife Medical Phils., Inc. (CMPI) collects cord blood for possible use later to manage or cure some diseases.

A little boy in Singapore dying of leukemia was saved when doctors processed his baby sister's cord blood stored by CordLife.

In developed countries like US, Japan and Korea, many parents now preserve their baby's cord blood.

The Philippine cord blood bank is part of the CordLife network established in Singapore in 2001. It now operates in several countries in Asia and collects cord blood from Southeast and North Asia.

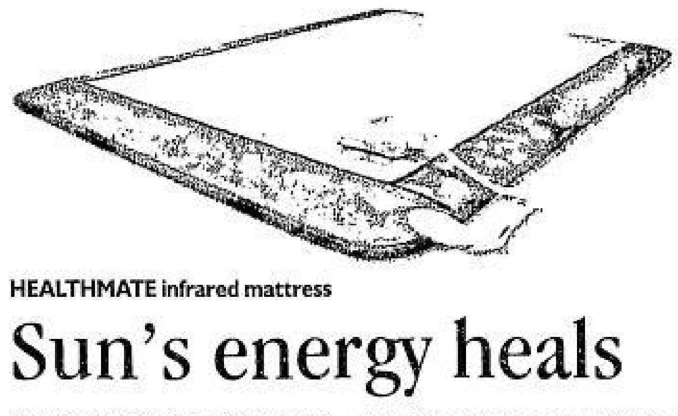
Since January this year, CMPI at the Discovery Centre, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, has already collected a significant number cord blood from pregnant women for cryo-preservation in its Singapore facility.

Stem cells in cord blood could be used to treat over 72 medical conditions, from leukemia, to some cancers, to the weakening of the immune system, said CordLife Singapore Medical Director Dr. Toh Keng Kiat.

He said with the increasing number of diseases that could be treated and the increasing cases of successful transplants done around the world, parents were more aware of the benefits of storing their baby's cord blood.

Cord blood from the Philippines is processed and stored at the company's state-of-the-art facility in Singapore. CordLife was the first in Southeast Asia to be accredited by the American Association of Blood Banks.

CMPI Country Manager Joey Salindong Salindong said, ultimately, CordLife was in the business of saving lives.



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Sun's energy heals

HEALTHMATE INFRARED MATtress, uses "FIR energy" technology to improve and maintain overall wellbeing.

FIR is a form of electromagnetic light energy from the sun, and is a safe form of energy. It is currently used in procedures like detoxification and cancer treatment.

The body can absorb FIR because of its deep penetrating ability. Once it penetrates the skin's deep layers of tissues, it transforms from light into heat energy. When the energy is absorbed by human cells, it causes a physical phenomenon called "resonance."

The thermal heat within the deep layers of the tissues causes blood vessels and capillaries to dilate. Toxins and metabolic waste are expelled from the body through perspiration, which is believed to eliminate up to 30 percent body waste.

Clinical studies reveal that FIR strengthens the immune system by stimulating increased production of white blood cells by the bone marrow, killer T-cells by the thymus, enzyme activity and metabolism.

It also helps eliminate fats, chemicals and toxins from the blood, plus excess sodium associated with hypertension. It is also known to have beneficial effects on illnesses like arthritis and diabetes.

New research has also discovered that FIR can kill disease-causing bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites.

HealthMate Infrared Mattress is exclusively distributed by IAJ Wellness Corporation. Call 3623396, 3621432 and 4128735 or e-mail sales@iajcorp.com.

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Eat smart this holiday season

THE YULETIDE SEASON FEASTING USUALLY means an array of digestive problems afterward.

Constipation is one common problem after the holidays. It may be due to stress, traveling, physical activity, a change in diet or overindulging in food.

To avoid the discomfort of constipation, people should remember to eat greens and other fiber-rich food to help the body maintain its normal processes even if they have to eat things like ham, white bread, pastries and pasta.

Potassium-rich food like carrots, pineapple, spinach, cucumber and goat's milk should be included in the diet to help prevent constipation. Potassium helps promote cell function and eliminates toxins in the body. It also helps attract water to aid digestion.

Cutting down on salt or salty food relieves the bloated feeling of constipation. Salt makes the body retain fluid, aggravating the heavy feeling of constipation.

Contact laxatives also help relieve discomfort. Dulcolax (bisacodyl) is a contact laxative that can provide effective and safe relief. Each tablet works after 6-12 hours.

The medicine stimulates the colon and helps the body restart its natural rhythm.

POKKA is made only from the finest carrots and other natural ingredients.

Healthy alternative beverage

POKKA OFFERS CARROT juice as a healthy alternative beverage for families.

It is rich in Vitamin C, Vitamin A, potassium and calcium that help promote growth and development of strong bones and maintenance of bodily tissues. Carrots have been found to protect the body against harmful microorganisms and prevent diseases because of phytochemicals and beta carotene.

Pokka Carrot Juice is a wholesome, refreshing drink made from the finest carrots and other natural ingredients. It is a good alternative to sodas and drinks not derived from natural ingredients.

Pokka Carrot Juice is available in leading supermarkets. It is exclusively distributed by Benby Enterprises Inc.

Monthly medication strengthens bones

IBANDRONIC ACID, THE FIRST AND ONLY once-monthly drug for the treatment of osteoporosis in women, "continues to be highly effective at strengthening bone in the spine and hip by increasing bone mineral density (BMD)."

This was one of the new findings from the first year of a study assessing the drug's long-term efficacy.

The Monthly Oral Ibandronate in Ladies Long Term Extension (Mobile LTE) study also shows ibandronic acid is well-tolerated over a three-year period.

The findings were presented for the first time at the 28th Meeting of the American Society of Bone Mineral Research (ASBMR).

An extension of the earlier two-year Mobile study involving 1,609 patients, the Mobile LTE study was designed to continue to assess the long-term efficacy of ibandronic acid in some patients by measuring BMD improvements over an additional three-year period.

BMD is an established means of assessing the effectiveness of osteoporosis treatments. It is used by doctors to predict fracture risk.

After the first year of the MOBILE LTE study, BMD of those receiving 150-mg ibandronic acid once a month increased at the lumbar spine by 1.5 percent and by 0.3 percent at the total hip. These are further improvements from the two-year BMD increases of 6.6 percent at the lumbar spine and 4.2 percent at the total hip. The drug was also found to be well-tolerated.

Side effects are cited by patients as major reasons they discontinue their osteoporosis treatment.

Professor Paul Miller of the Colorado Center for Bone Research, lead author of the Mobile study, said tolerability was particularly important in treating postmenopausal osteoporosis.

During the ASBMR meeting, it was shown that the convenience of less frequent dosing was an important reason many patients preferred the once-monthly oral ibandronic acid.

Data also showed that patients taking the drug were about 25 percent more likely to stay on their treatment during the first six months compared to women on weekly treatments.

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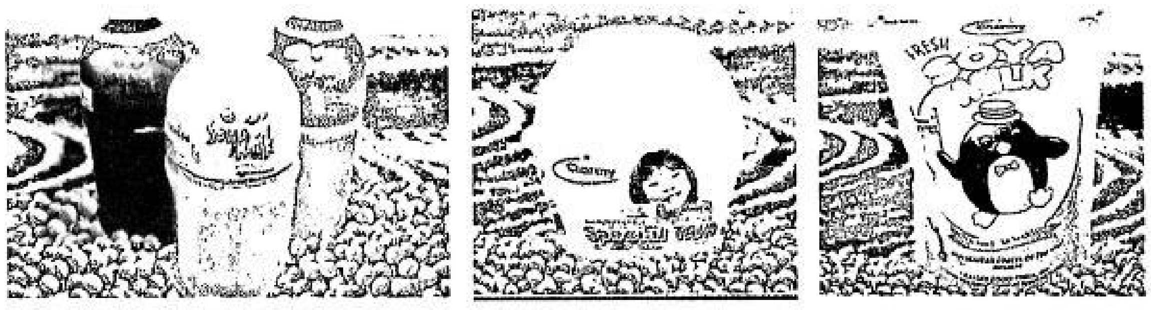

CHARMY has raw ingredients or the tofu line and chilled items like soymilk and *taho*.

Award-winning food manufacturer

CHARMY FOOD PHILIPPINES HAS BEcome a dependable supplier of fresh and chilled soy products and has received the Outstanding Manufacturer of Soya Products award three times from the Consumer Union of the Philippines.

It uses only 100 percent food grade soybeans and adheres strictly to quality control criteria set by the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD).

Charmy has helped make Filipinos aware of soy's various health benefits. The beans are a good source of protein and calcium. They are low in fat and cholesterol, and are lactose-free.

Soy beans are also reputed to be beneficial to menopausal women and help prevent heart disease, high blood pressure, and strokes.

Charmy products include raw ingredients or the tofu line and chilled items such as soymilk and *taho*. They are available in Ministop Convenience stores, Rustan's Supermarkets, Shopwise Supercenters, Pioneer Center, Unimart and Makati Supermarket. Call 6438746 or visit www.chamyfood.com.

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Ayala to EK
Weekdays until Dec 10 and Jan 2 - 7: 10:30am
Weekends/Holidays: 10:30am & 12:30pm
Dec 18 - 30 and Jan 1: 10:30am & 12:30pm
Dec 24 & 31: 10:30am
EK to Ayala
Weekdays until Dec 10 and Jan 2 - 7: 7pm
Weekend/Holidays: 7pm & 10pm
Dec 18 - 30 and Jan 1: 7pm, 10pm & 12mn
Dec 24 & 31: 7pm

SHUTTLE SERVICE SCHEDULE (Market! Market Terminal)
Market! Market to EK
Weekdays until Dec 10, and Jan 2 - 7: 11am
Weekend & Holidays: 11am & 1pm
Dec 18 to 30 and Jan 1: 11am & 1pm
Dec 24 & 31: 11am
EK to Market! Market
Until Jan 7: 7pm

• Shuttle tickets to EK may be purchased prior to boarding • Shuttle tickets from EK must be purchased 2 hours before departure schedule • Call 811-4839 to 43 for more details.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
sms feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

MIGUEL MENDOZA on his last "Idol" night

'Bunso' takes boot like a man

By Armin Adina

THE "BUNSO" IS OUT OF the competition.

Miguel Mendoza, youngest contestant in "Philippine Idol," was voted out of the ABC 5 talent search program last week. But the 17-year-old crooner took the decision like a grown man.

"I was prepared," he confessed, saying his expulsion immediately sank in. "I just thought anything might happen."

Miguel, a De La Salle-Zobel high school senior, often received flak for his singing even as his inclusion in the Top 4 was credited only to his good looks.

But he was surprisingly showered with praise after giving impressive interpretations of standards during Sunday night's performance.

Judge Francis Magalona said he hit every note while Pilita Corales said he was "very good." But Ryan Cayabyab went a step further: He promised to write a song with him "if you don't make it (on Monday)."

Are you sad or relieved?

Relieved, because the stress and pressure are all gone. But my friends are sad.

What will you tell them?

This is a contest. They have to accept it.

How far did you think you would go in the competition?

I wanted to win. I envisioned myself at the top.

Was there anything in the contest you were not prepared for?

I expected humiliation but not that much. Friends tell me about the nasty things written about me in [online] forums.

How do you handle such comments?

'BUNSO'/E3

Stage mom spoils pictorial

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

THE MOM OF NADINE SAMONTE WAS A major headache during the pictorial of her daughter. Nadine and her two co-stars were supposed to be in a playful pose, just a bit daring but not bold. The mom decided to ruin it. She didn't want Nadine to wear a sexy top and red lipstick. She kept muttering, "*Hindi* bold star *ang anak ko!*"

To appease her, Nadine ended up wearing a jacket and shorts. She also changed her lipstick to a paler shade. This trashed the original concept altogether. An insider lamented, "*Dapat sa* client *mag*-complain *yung* mom *ni* Nadine. *Sila nag*-conceptualize *ng* pictorial. We were just following orders."

Nadine strikes a pose and her mom will op-

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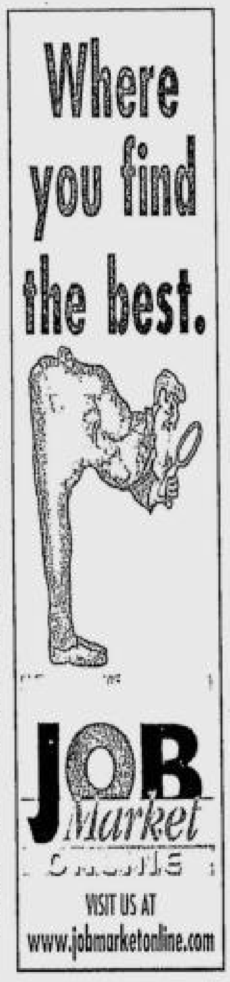

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1 HAPPY FEET
MTRCB GP
12 05, 2.30, 5.00, 7.30, 10:00

2 DECK THE HALLS
MTRCB GP
12 40, 3 00, 5 20, 7 40, 10 00

3 THE RETURN
MTRCB PG 13
1 00, 3 15, 5.30, 7 45, 10:00

4 CASINO ROYALE
MTRCB PG-13
12.55, 4 00, 7 05 10 10

PREMIERE THEATRE
RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES / MTRCB GP
12 40, 3 00, 5 20, 7 40, 10 00

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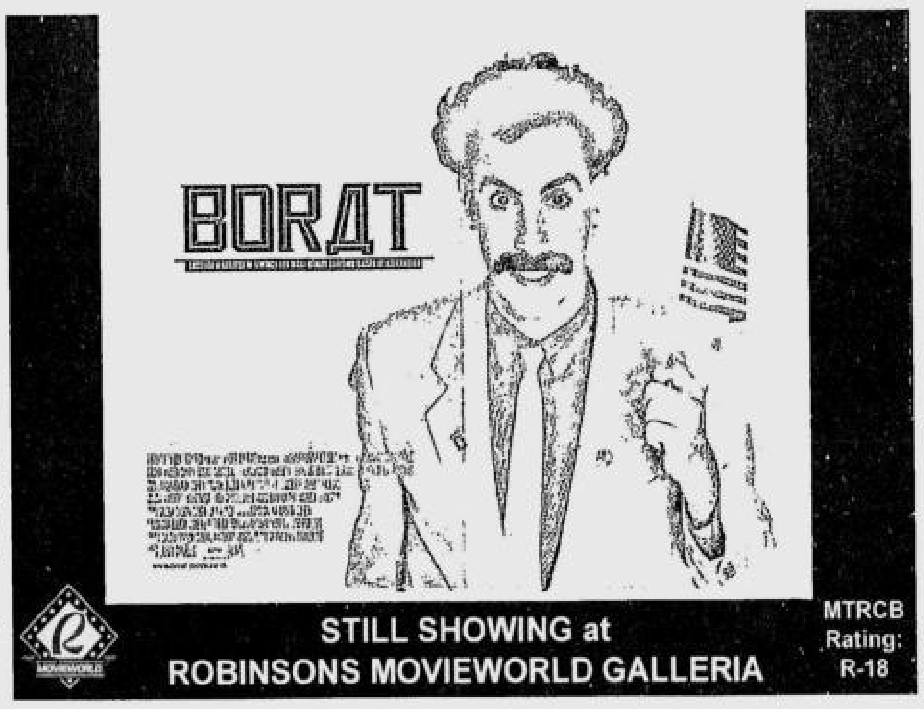

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MTRCB RATING ▷ GP GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

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"A GREAT CINEMATIC EVENT."
~His Eminence Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican Secretary of State

"This is our answer to the BLASPHEMY [*The Da Vinci Code*] thrown at our faith..."
~His Eminence Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales

"Hooray for Holy-wood...the must-see movie this holiday season. And the unprecedented well-received Vatican premiere is the papal equivalent of **TWO THUMBS UP.**" Rebecca Winters Keegan
~TIME Magazine

"I'm not an emotional person, but when I finished watching it ... **THE TEARS CAME DOWN MY CHEEK. I COULDN'T SPEAK.**" Anne Graham Lotz
~NEWSWEEK Magazine

"**A DIVINE LOVE STORY** comparable to those tearjerkers penned by NICOLAS SPARKS and ERICH SEGAL." Nancy Rose
~VANITY FAIR Magazine

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movietime exclusive presents

THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

Meet Nick Naylor, the chief spokesman of the Academy for Tobacco Studies, whose job is to be in favor to smokers and cigarette makers. Usually confronted by conservative lawmakers (who legislates on putting poison labels on every pack), Naylor resets the agenda by devising ways to shut up cancer patients to speak against smoking and by enlisting an A-List Hollywood director to make smoking "cool" in movies. But at the end of the day, the curiosity of his son about his job makes Naylor think another perspective for their future.

WARNING: Watching this movie is not dangerous to your health.

NOW SHOWING AT SM MANILA

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

DISTRIBUTED BY 20th Century Fox

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Exclusively at The BLOCK and SM Southmall	Exclusively at SM Megamall
AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH	GRIDIRON GANG

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104

IMAX

HAPPY FEET IN 2D

3:30PM 8:10PM 10:00PM

Matinee Fee- P200 Primetime Fee- P250

T-REX IN 3D

10:30AM 11:45AM 1:00PM 2:15PM 5:50PM

Admission Fee- P200

1 FRAGILE
2 CASINO ROYALE
3 HAPPY FEET
4 HAPPY FEET
5 THE RETURN
6 INANG YAYA

PREMIERE CINEMA
RESERVED

DIRECTOR'S CLUB
RESERVED

CENTERSTAGE
DECK THE HALLS

THE PODIUM

CINEMA 1
DECK THE HALLS

CINEMA 2
HAPPY FEET

633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
3 DONSOL
4 HAPPY FEET
5 INANG YAYA
6 HAPPY FEET
7 CASINO ROYALE
8 PITONG DALAGITA
9 RESERVED
10 MEE-SHEE
11 WAG KANG LILINGON
12 THE RETURN

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 THE RETURN
2 INANG YAYA
3 HAPPY FEET
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 ZU WARRIORS
7 GRIDIRON GANG
8 FRAGILE
9 RESERVED
10 RESERVED
11 DECK THE HALLS
12 PITONG DALAGITA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 HAPPY FEET
2 FRAGILE
3 ZU WARRIORS
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 THE RETURN
6 PITONG DALAGITA
7 HAPPY FEET
8 WAG KANG LILINGON
9 INANG YAYA
10 GIGIL
11 DECK THE HALLS
12 DONSOL

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 HAPPY FEET
4 INANG YAYA
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 MEE-SHEE
7 THE RETURN
8 DONSOL
9 PITONG DALAGITA
10 FRAGILE

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 HAPPY FEET
2 HAPPY FEET
3 THE RETURN
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 INANG YAYA

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 THE RETURN
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET
5 CASINO ROYALE
6 MEE-SHEE
7 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
8 WAG KANG LILINGON
9 PITONG DALAGITA

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 HAPPY FEET
2 INANG YAYA
3 THE RETURN
4 CASINO ROYALE

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 THE RETURN
2 FRAGILE
3 MEE-SHEE
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 HAPPY FEET
6 DONSOL
7 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING
8 PITONG DALAGITA
9 DECK THE HALLS
10 GIGIL
11 WAG KANG LILINGON
12 INANG YAYA

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4233201-04

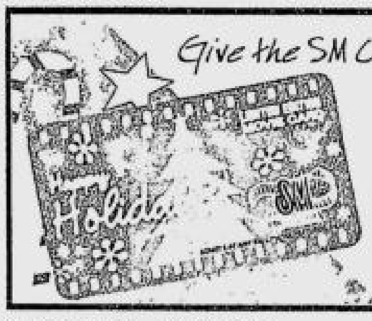
1 HAPPY FEET
2 BOA
3 PITONG DALAGITA
4 INANG YAYA

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 HAPPY FEET
2 INANG YAYA
3 FRAGILE
4 PITONG DALAGITA

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 THE RETURN
2 INANG YAYA
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 HAPPY FEET



Give the SM Cinema Happy Holidays Movie Card

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SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 DONSOL
2 GIGIL
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 WAG KANG LILINGON
5 HAPPY FEET
6 INANG YAYA
7 PITONG DALAGITA
8 FRAGILE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 ANG PAMANA
2 CASINO ROYALE
3 HAPPY FEET
4 INANG YAYA
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 ANG PAMANA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 PITONG DALAGITA
3 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 INANG YAYA

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 THE MARINE
2 INANG YAYA
3 PITONG DALAGITA
4 THE GRUDGE 2

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 HAPPY FEET
3 PITONG DALAGITA
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
5 INANG YAYA
6 WAG KANG LILINGON

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 INANG YAYA
3 PITONG DALAGITA
4 THE MARINE

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 HAPPY FEET
3 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 INANG YAYA

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 INANG YAYA
2 WAG KANG LILINGON
3 HAPPY FEET
4 THE MARINE

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 HAPPY FEET
2 INANG YAYA
3 FRAGILE
4 PITONG DALAGITA

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66

1 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
2 PITONG DALAGITA
3 HAPPY FEET
4 INANG YAYA

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 HAPPY FEET
2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
5 SANTA CLAUSE
6 WAG KANG LILINGON
7 INANG YAYA
8 CASINO ROYALE

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 INANG YAYA
2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 WAG KANG LILINGON
5 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
6 CASINO ROYALE
7 RESERVED
8 BOA

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 DONSOL
5 SANTA CLAUSE 3
6 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 CASINO ROYALE

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Hey kids! Come and join the fun and celebrate with Barney as SM Cinema present

Barney's Tee-rific Movie!

Sing and dance with Barney, Baby Bop, BJ and the rest of their friends

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

CINEMA ACCESS
635-5555
FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9116

1 CASINO ROYALE • THX
1:00 4:00 7:00 10.00

2 DONSOL
12.20 2:40 5:00

3 THE RETURN
1:25 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

4 DECK THE HALLS
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

5 HAPPY FEET
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 INANG YAYA
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

7 PITONG DALAGITA
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00

8 BORAT
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

9 DONSOL
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9.50

10 MEE-SHEE
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 HAPPY FEET
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

2 DECK THE HALLS
12:20 2.20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

3 THE RETURN
12.10 2:10 4:10 6:10 8:10 10:00

4 PITONG DALAGITA
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

5 MEE-SHEE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50

6 INANG YAYA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 CASINO ROYALE
11:00 1:40 4:20 7:00 9.50

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 MEE-SHEE
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 HAPPY FEET
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9.05

3 INANG YAYA
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 THE RETURN
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

5 CASINO ROYALE
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

6 PITONG DALAGITA
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

7 DECK THE HALLS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

8 DONSOL
1:00 3:00 5.00 7:00 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

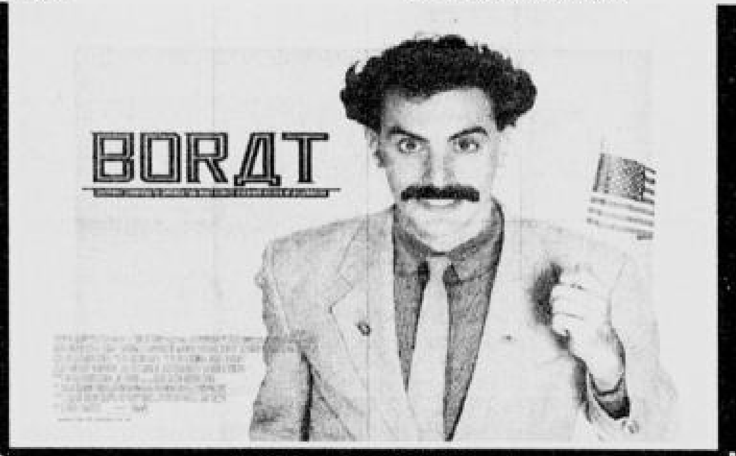
1 HAPPY FEET
2 INANG YAYA
3 DECK THE HALLS
4 PITONG DALAGITA
5 CASINO ROYALE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 INANG YAYA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE RETURN
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 DECK THE HALLS



STILL SHOWING at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD GALLERIA

MTRCB Rating: R-18

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 THE MARINE
2 INANG YAYA
3 BOA
4 GIGIL

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2126 (046) 416-4332

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 INANG YAYA
3 ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
4 FEAST

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 INANG YAYA

STARMILLS (045) 875-1827 (045) 961-6270

1 HAPPY FEET
2 PITONG DALAGITA
3 INANG YAYA
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 CASINO ROYALE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHER
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 THE MARINE
6 GIGIL

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 INANG YAYA
3 BOA
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 HAPPY FEET

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Stage mom spoils ...

From page E1

pose. That's taking stage motherhood to the next level, huh?

Envious mom?

COULD it be true that **Jackie Rice**'s mom beats her up and she just covers her black and blue marks with make-up? Someone privy to Jackie's situation reveals, "*Parang* true-to-life Bakekang story *silang mag-ina*.

Beautiful daughter. Plain looking mother. Is the ma envious of her kid's good looks?" Poor girl!

Real thing?

IS ROMANCE brewing between **Mark Herras** and **Katrina Halili**? Heard they spent time together in a secluded place recently. I see nothing wrong—they're both free anyway. Could it be the real thing?

Just for show

JUST to confirm my scoop here a few issues ago, **Derek Ramsey** is indeed serious with his French/Pinay GF **Solenn Heusaff**. She used to work for **Christian Lacroix** in Paris and is now with **Lulu Tan Gan**. Solenn is so close to Derek's family that his niece was even named after her. So I was right. Those talks linking him to **Angelica Panganiban** are all for show.

Kid at heart

I SALUTE **Diether Ocampo** for putting up K.I.D.S. (Kabataang Inyong Dapat Suportahan) foundation. It's time and money well-spent for Diet and his partners. He beams, "When my son Dream is of age, I want him to continue what I started. I think my little man understands my advocacy; he doesn't get jealous of the kids in my foundation."

Does this mean he's got his hands full, so no more kids of his own? "I want to contribute to the human population so I plan to have a big family."

Diet's heart will never age 'cause it's got KIDS written all over it.

Flawless

I ENJOYED the sumptuous Christmas delicacies at the opening of Forever Flawless' 10th branch at Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall. **Lorna T**, **Mark Herras** and **Yasmien Kurdi**, who all swear by the premier skin clinic's power peel and mesotherapy, were also around to add glitter to the affair. Thanks to Ms **Ruby Coiyuto**, **Francis Labora** and the ever gracious staff for pampering me the "FF" way.

New love team

STAR Magic Presents "Abt Ur Luv" every Saturday, 5 p.m., featuring ABS-CBN's new batch of young stars—**Aaron Agassi, AJ Perez, Aldred Gatchalian, Angelo Patrimonio, Carla Humphries, Cris Gutierrez, Denise Laurel, Dino Imperial, Empress Schuck, Enchong Dee, Joaqui Mendoza, Lauren Young, Mikee Lee, Mikki Arceo, Rayver Cruz, Shaina Magdayao, Valeen Montenegro, Victor Basa** and **Zia Marquez**.

The refreshing series tells us to live love and love life. In the pilot

STAGE/ E4

'Bunso' takes boot . . .

From page E1

I take them as flattery. I'm more talked about than any other Idol; that must mean something.

Mr. C said you got the most screams from fans in the "Idol" mall shows.

I didn't notice until he said it. That comment would make me strive better. I have something, the appeal. I can improve on that.

Now that you are out of the competition, who will get your vote?

Jan. Because he's the freshest—he has a lot to prove. He can give more.

PILIPINAS, GAY KA NA BA?
RARAMPA NA ANG PELIKULANG
YAYANIG SA INYONG NGALA-NGALA!

KEANNA REEVES **PAOLO** CONTIS **MELANIE** MARQUEZ
EUGENE DOMINGO **JAYSON** GAINZA **FRANZEN** FAJARDO **BOBBY** ANDREWS
DIEGO LLORICO **IC** MENDOZA **BELLIE** FLORES
& **EDDIE** GARCIA

Reyna
Ang Makulay na Pakikipagsapalaran ng mga Achucherva, Achuchuva, Achechene
OPENS TOMORROW
DIRECTED BY SOXIE TOPACIO
www viva com ph
VIVA

NOW SHOWING

Ang oras, nahahati.
Ang puso, hindi.

Maricel Soriano bilang

Inang Yaya

INANG YAYA
A UNICO ENTERTAINMENT RELEASE of A UNITEL PICTURES PRODUCTION
Also Starring SUNSHINE CRUZ ZOREN LEGASPI LIZA LORENA
Introducing ERIKA ORETA TALA SANTOS
Sound MARK LOCSIN and ANGIE REYES Music NONONG BUENCAMINO Editor RANDY GABRIEL
Production Designer NORMAN REGALADO Director of Photography GARY GARDOCE Line Producer NOEMI PEJI
Co-Executive Producers JUN REYES TITO VELASCO Executive Producers WYNGARD TRACY MARICEL SORIANO
Producer TONY GLORIA Writer VERONICA VELASCO Directors PABLO BIGLANG-AWA and VERONICA VELASCO

Handog ng ALASKA
ALASKA MILK CORPORATION
Official Radio Station

MTRCB Rating G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

THE RETURN PG13 2:00,4:00,6:00,8:00	HAPPY FEET G 1:25,3:45,6:05,8:25	DECK THE HALLS G 1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15
BORAT R18 2:00,4:00,6:00,8:00	MEE - SHEE: THE GIANT WATER G 2:55,5:05,7:15	CASINO ROYALE 007 PG13 1:35,4:30,7:25,10:20

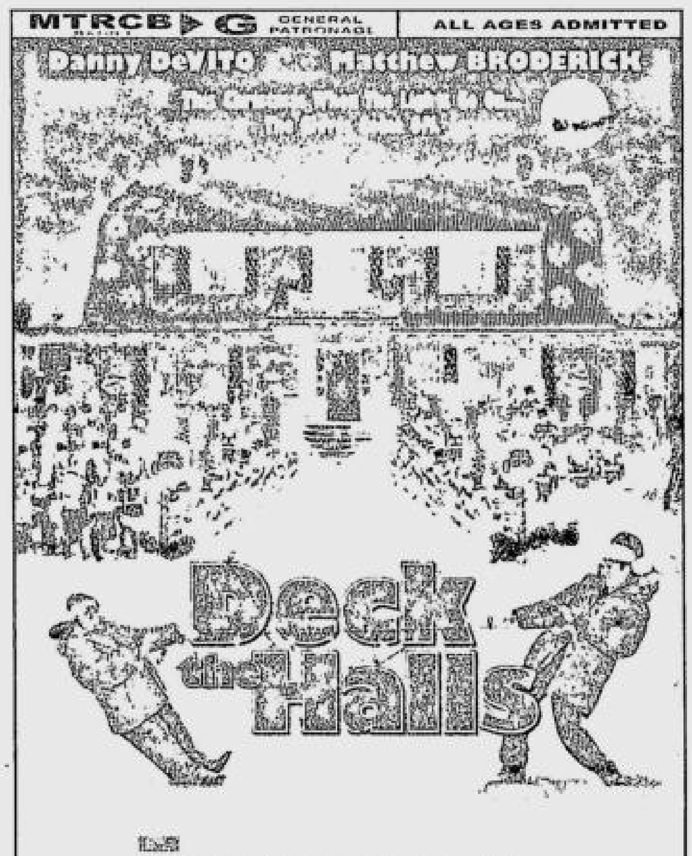
MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE- FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898 1440-41
MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – FREE SEATING – MONDAY-FRIDAY.

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

Russell Crowe
a film by Ridley Scott
a good year

GRAND OPENING TOMORROW!

MTRCB RATING G GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED



NOW SHOWING

ARANETA CENTER
Gateway Mall FarmersPlaza

THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY Gateway CINEPLEX*10 FULL STADIUM SEATING

THE RETURN 10 / 2:20/5:30/7:40/9:50	INANG YAYA 1:00 / 3:10/5:20/7:30/9:40	DECK THE HALLS 12:30/2:45/5:00/7:15/9:30	
THE COVENANT 2:30/4:50/7:10/9:30	FRAGILE 2:10/4:35/7:00/9:25	HAPPY FEET 12:15/2:35/4:55/7:15/9:40	
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX	CASINO ROYALE 1:20 / 4:10/7:00/9:50	BORAT 2:30/4:50 /7:10/ 9:30	HAPPY FEET 2:00/4:20/6:40/9:00

MALL 5

INANG YAYA 11:55/2:05/4:15/6:25/8:35	CASINO ROYALE 12:00/2:50/5:40, 8:30	HAPPY FEET 1:05/3:25/5:45/ 8:05
GIGIL 12:05/2:10/4:15/ 6:20/ 8:25	THE RETURN 12:05 / 2:[illegible] 55/ 4:05/6:15/8:25	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM

PBA PHILIPPINE CUP
Dec. 5 - 4:05 GINEBRA vs AIR 21 / 6:30 STA LUCIA vs TALK N TEXT

PHILIPPINE IDOL
December 9, Sat. & December 10, Sun. 7:30 pm

MMTA
METRO MANILA
THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 HAPPY FEET
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 THE RETURN
4 CASINO ROYALE
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CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 836.4234/836.4216
1 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 THE RETURN

starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266159
3 INANG YAYA
4 THE RETURN
5 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema
www.cashflocity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 8433094
1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
3 THE RETURN
4 INANG YAYA

THEATRES
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 INANG YAYA
3 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 INANG YAYA
2 GIGIL
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 FRAGILE
2 MEE SHEE
3 DECK THE HALLS
4 HAPPY FEET
5 THE RETURN
6 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
7 INANG YAYA
8 PITONG DALAGITA
9 DONSOL
10 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) RESERVED
2 (DOLBY) RESERVED
3 (DOLBY) HAPPY FEET
4 (DOLBY) INANG YAYA

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 INANG YAYA
4 PITONG DALAGITA
5 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
2 GIGIL
3 FRAGILE
4 ZU WARRIOR

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290/833.3274
1 INANG YAYA
2 THE RETURN
3 HAPPY FEET

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 THE MARINE
2 FEAST

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 INANG YAYA
3 ANG PAMANA
4 FEAST

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7037
1 GIGIL
2 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6953 or 72
1 DECK THE HALLS
2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4 THE RETURN

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 INANG YAYA
3 HAPPY FEET
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 INANG YAYA

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 GIGIL
2 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
3 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
2 GIGIL
3 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4 THE MARINE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 INANG YAYA
3 PITONG DALAGITA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 WAG KANG LILINGON

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 HALIMUYAK
3 KANDUNGAN
4 THE GRUDGE - 2

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 INANG YAYA
2 WILD BUTTERFLY
3 THE GRUDGE - 2
4 MAPUSOK
5 HAPPY FEET

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 GIGIL
2 BOA
3 THE MARINE
4 INANG YAYA

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2830 / 879.2029
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 ANG PAMANA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Stage mom spoils pictorial

From page E2

episode, Stick (Victor) and Brenda (Carla) admitted their feelings for each other. Off-cam the two charmers are genuinely fond of each other. Carla naughtily says, "I have a hidden desire for Victor." Victor seems smitten. "I love the way Carla has a ready smile for everybody." Wonder if that will make Victor's fotog ex **Jenna Genio** say "cheese" or "cheesy!"

Bossa nova album

VICOR Music on its 40th year in the biz proves that it still got what it takes to command the trend in the local recording industry via their "Bossa Nova Collection." Other recording companies have taken cue and followed suit.

Check out Vicor's "Cinderella B.N." collection featuring "TL Ako Sa Yo," "Ang Boyfriend Kong Baduy," "Bato sa Buhangin" and its "Christmas B.N." album to make your Yule so cool. All the five releases (including "VST Bossa Nova," "B.N. Experience" and "Another B.N. Experience" featuring **Astrud Gilberto's** hits and timeless love songs) will be available in a specially priced CD package collectors' limited edition.

Reyna

IT'S GOING to be a grand gay showdown or, as they say in Tagalog, *baklaan* to the max when "Reyna," the new ensemble comedy from Viva Films, opens on Dec. 6.

The movie stars a first rate cast of actors led by **Eddie Garcia,** who plays a gay role as an aging beauty pageant make-up artist. Also in the cast are: **Keanna Reeves** as the frustrated beauty pageant wannabe who's so desperate to win a crown she pretends to be gay just so she can join a gay beauty pageant; **Melanie Marquez** as Keanna's beauty queen mother *na kahit* baranggay beauty contest *lang ang napanalunan*, still dreams of one day seeing her daughter win a beauty title; and **Eugene Domingo** as Keanna's aunt.

Playing pivotal roles are **Paolo Contis, Manny Castaneda, Bobby Andrews, IC Mendoza, Belly Flory, Diego Llorico** and ex-PBB housemates **Franzen Fajardo** and **Jason Gainza** who get to try on gay roles for size.

E-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com

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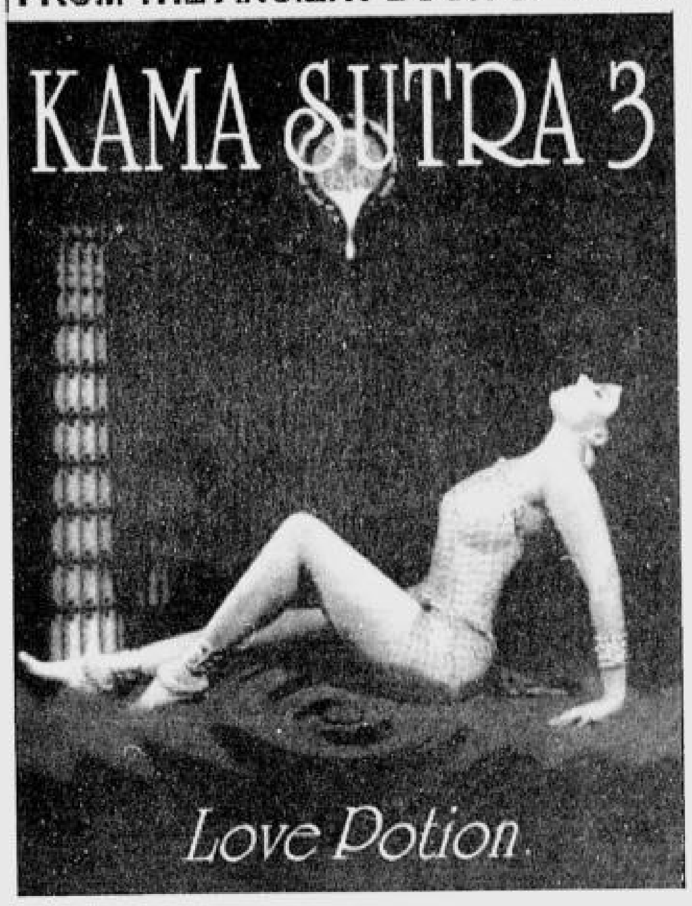
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	DECK THE HALLS	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	G
2	HAPPY FEET	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00	G
3	CASINO ROYALE	1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:40	PG-13
4	THE RETURN	1:55, 4:10, 6:25, 8:40, 10:55	PG-13

OPENS TOMORROW!
DISCOVER THE SECRETS
FROM THE ANCIENT BOOK OF LOVE
KAMA SUTRA 3



Love Potion

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
THE STAR OF "THE GRUDGE" RETURNS
IN ANOTHER SPINE-TINGLING TALE FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE
NOW SHOWING

In 1981, a woman was brutally murdered. Now, she's reaching out from the grave to warn the next victim.
SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR
THE RETURN

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THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
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CINEMA 1	THE RETURN	12:15 , 2:25 , 4:35 6:45 , 9:00	PG-13
CINEMA 2	CASINO ROYALE	12:10 , 3:20 , 6:30 9:40	PG-13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
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CINEMA 3	DECK THE HALLS	11:15, 1:35, 3:50 6:05, 8:20, 10:35	GP
CINEMA 4	HAPPY FEET	11:20 , 2:05 , 4:50 7:35 , 10:20	GP
CINEMA 5	HAPPY FEET	10:50, 1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50	GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM

NOV 30, DEC 1 & 7	NINA	9:00 PM
DEC 02 2006	CUESHE	9:00 PM

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
DEC 5 & 12 , 2006	DYORDS KO PO	8:30 PM
DEC. 6 & 13 , 2006	CERRUDO CLASSICO	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722 4532 LOC 118
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION PLS CALL 721-6726 OR 721-0635

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777
THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 CASINO ROYALE	2 HAPPY FEET	3 PITONG DALAGITA	4 INANG YAYA			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE RETURN	2 INANG YAYA	3 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 DECK THE HALLS	5 HAPPY FEET	6 HAPPY FEET	7 BORAT
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 HAPPY FEET	2 DECK THE HALLS					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	3 DECK THE HALLS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BORAT GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE RETURN GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	2 DECK THE HALLS	3 CASINO ROYALE	4 MARIE ANTOINETTE	5 THE RETURN		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 HAPPY FEET	2 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS	3 INANG YAYA	4 CASINO ROYALE			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 DECK THE HALLS	2 INANG YAYA	3 CASINO ROYALE	4 PITONG DALAGITA	5 THE RETURN		

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Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Dora's Sing-Along Fiesta Live Show December 8 to 10, 2006	Anson Exhibit December 11 to 22, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Ballet Center December 9, 2006	Christmas Goodies Bazaar December 11 to 15, 2006

GREENBELT — Holiday Harmonies with the Philippine Madrigal Singers December 2, 9 & 23, 2006
GREENBELT ONSTAGE 1 — Repertory Philippines presents SOUND OF MUSIC at REP's Globe Theater - November 11 to December 17, 2006 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM — Watch RILES: LIFE ON THE TRACKS: A documentary by acclaimed Filipino director Ditsi Carolino December 15, 2006 / 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

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many times, many ways
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Nov 25 - 2pm, 6pm
Nov 26 - 2pm, 6pm
Activity Center
Concierge Hotline : 886-7519

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
December 1-3, 2006
Dec 1 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
Dec 2 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
Dec 3 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
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Concierge Hotline : 842-2782, 772-1800

AYALA CENTER CEBU
November 17-19, 2006
Nov 17 - 4pm, 6:30pm
Nov 18 - 11am, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm
Nov. 19 - 11am, 3pm, 6:30pm
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